

How To Be Rich



ALSON M. DOAK



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HOW TO BE RICH

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How to be Rich

Short Studies in the
Things that are Worth While

By

ALSON M. DOAK

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21

Contents

I. THE SOURCES OF WEALTH,	7
II. NATURAL WEALTH,	17
III. CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION,	41
IV. SILENT PARTNERS,	65
V. THE MASTER SPIRIT,	83
VI. THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY,	111
VII. LIFE'S DECISIONS,	131
VIII. SOME ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS,	149
IX. WORKING WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN,	167
X. THE ULTIMATE RESULT,	191

I. The Sources of Wealth

“This world ’s no blot for us,
Nor blank ; it means intensely, and means good ;
To find its meaning is my meat and drink.”
—*Browning*.

“Give me health and a day and I will make
the pomp of emperors ridiculous.”—*Emerson*.

“The lily’s lips are pure and white
without a touch of fire ;
The rose’s heart is warm and red
and sweetened with desire.
In earth’s broad fields of deathless bloom,
the gladdest lives are those
Whose thoughts are as the lily,
and whose love is like the rose.”

THE SOURCES OF WEALTH

THE strongest appeal of this age to many is on the commercial side. So richly has nature and the God of nature endowed us as a Nation that we are rich beyond the dreams of the ages. So lavishly have we used, and in many instances wasted, our resources that huge fortunes are a common thing, and the dream of wealth haunts us day and night, and is so persistent that we are prone to forget everything else. So strong has become this tendency that a balance-wheel or a safety-valve is very much needed in order that we may not run away with ourselves and miss the true wealth which we seek.

When we pause a moment and take time to think, we know that money is not wealth, but only the medium of exchange by means of which we obtain those things which really enrich us. A man may possess millions and yet be so poor

HOW TO BE RICH

and miserable as to end his life by suicide; or on the other hand, with but a scant supply of dollars be so rich in life as to want to live on forever.

It is these larger and more fundamental things, therefore, to which we ought to devote the best of life. Yet, how often our higher life fails to draw out the treasures of its environment.

I heard a group of young girls talking one day of a companion, a girl of sixteen. They said she had run the whole round of pleasures and exhausted all there was in life, so that nothing interested her any more. Poor thing! How narrow must have been her range of vision! and how cheap her taste of existence! When we think of the flood of treasures that a beneficent and bountiful Creator has poured around this old world, we can not but conclude that those maidens were only wading in some little frog pond, dreaming all the while that it was the ocean.

There is a life worth while, rich beyond all

THE SOURCES OF WEALTH

the dreams of the soul, if we have but the spiritual instinct to discover it.

The marvelous personality that God has given us finds expression in a many-sided and complex life. Some would have us believe that we have only a physical existence; and still more—who believe better—act as if this were true. Many give all their time and thought to the merely animal part of their being. Others would teach that the mind is all there is of us, and let the body suffer and die because of a silly and immoral fad. Then we find, too, saints—so called—who regard the body as a burden and a curse, mental culture a delusion, social life a snare, the delights of nature and art as devices of the devil; and who would have us take up an abnormal spiritual existence as the only thing pleasing to God.

Utterly false are all such conceptions of life. If we would take life naturally as it unfolds, and seek the best development of every phase of it, we would be truly rich.

But, what do we mean by such a life and training?

HOW TO BE RICH

The child is conscious at first only of physical need, and its pleasures consist in those things that satisfy and bring comfort to the body. As soon as it grows a little older it comes to enjoy mother's fairy tales and the recital of simple stories. Its mental life is opening to the great world of literature and mind. Instruments of music bring delight, and still another realm is opened to its expanding vision. It comes to love pictures, the society of its companions, and other sources of enjoyment. These all contribute their share to the enlargement of the life. The thing we should never forget is that every side of this life is God-given, and should be God-used.

As the wealth of the field and orchard lies in their fruitfulness, so the true wealth of this life of ours lies in what it is able to make out of the raw materials of its existence. That life only is rich which is productive—which utilizes its experiences in the world, and weaves them into the richer fabric of the soul.

There are many sources outside of self for

THE SOURCES OF WEALTH

the enrichment of our being—for the building up of that life which alone is worth the living.

Nature, which is the visible expression of the thought of the Eternal Mind, is one of these. Rich, indeed, is that life which is lived in touch with the heart of the world. If young people would seek an acquaintance with the natural world so full of wonder and charm, they would find it much easier to keep away from those things that are undesirable.

The many phases of our contact with other minds is invaluable, and one of the richest sources of life. Especially is this true of that aspect of it which is afforded by the world of books—too much liable to neglect in these days. The great works of literature are the medium of the world's highest inspiration, and its great reservoirs of mental and spiritual power. Poor beyond expression is that life that has not learned to keep company with the greatest men and women of the ages through those books which are the best product of their souls.

But the chief and final source of the life

HOW TO BE RICH

that would be really rich must be found in the subtle fellowship of the human spirit with that intelligence which lies back of all things.

These things must become our own in a very real sense. We can not be enriched by that which does not become a part of ourselves.

The field of ripened grain is rich and precious, not by what was in the soil of the field, but only by that part of it which was woven into the very structure of its own being. That which can not be so used is worthless. The rose is red and sweet with its own characteristic perfume because it wrought into itself just those elements which would produce such results, and rejected what was foreign to its purpose. Gold is made less and not more valuable by the dross incorporated with it. So that only is true wealth which is so used as to enrich the life itself and make it more worth the living. Money and the other good things of the world of a material sort may be so used as to contribute largely to this end, or they may be so used as to give an opposite result. So in themselves they can not be

THE SOURCES OF WEALTH

regarded as riches. True wealth consists not in dollars, but in the life which dollars may contribute their share toward enriching. It is only through the uses to which they may be put that dollars become a part of our real wealth.

The declaration of every individual should be, "What I want is not a rich living, I want only a rich life."

Because of these truths our discussion in this little book must deal not with money, or its equivalent, but with this many-sided life. Here, or not at all, must we find the riches of existence, the wealth of the universe.

II. Natural Wealth

“In the woods we return to reason and faith.”
—*Emerson.*

“The sky is a drinking cup,
That was overturned of old,
And it pours in the eyes of men
Its wine of airy gold.

We drink that wine all day
Till the last drop is drained up,
And are lighted off to bed
By the jewels in the cup.”
—*Richard Henry Stoddard.*

“A man must have quiet and solitude in order to find himself—one of the great ends of human seeking.”

“The fruit of the orchard ripens through long days and quiet nights; and the spirit of man must ripen under like conditions.”

“There is no medicine so potent as the sweet breath and the sweeter seclusion of the woods; there is no tonic like a free life under the open sky.”
—*Hamilton Wright Mabie.*

NATURAL WEALTH

NO RANKER heresy was ever uttered than the old and oft repeated statement, made by those who thought themselves strictly orthodox, that "This world is a desert drear." It is a desert only to those whose souls are shrunken and shriveled, or who have been sadly misled by false teaching.

Well do I remember how in boyhood days my soul revolted from that thought. I hated and despised the very words with which it was expressed. How utterly false it was to all my experiences. How I delighted in the blessed insights of the barefoot boy as he touched, after the simplest fashion, the good things of life. The tickle of the grass on his bare feet in spring-time; the lying under the apple trees as they rained their blossoms upon him, and delighted the air with their uncloying sweetness; the blue

HOW TO BE RICH

of the sky with its floating clouds, and the mystery of space and time, life and eternity; the rustle of the corn and the ripple of the brook; the delightful aroma of the muskmelon and the peach; the gold of the pumpkin, the crimson of the strawberry, the purple of the grape, and the brilliant hues of the flowers; the flavor of the berries, and the wild plums of the thicket; the fellowship of the little creatures of the woods and fields,—all these, and more of their kind, made this world to me a place fit to spend eternity in.

How delightfully sane and sensible is James Whitcomb Riley when he plunges into “The Old Swimmin’ Hole,” or wades “Knee-deep in June.” How sweet the memories awakened by words like these:

“Tell you what I like the best—
 ’Long about knee-deep in June,
 ’Bout the time strawberries melts
 On the vine,—some afternoon,
 Like to jes’ git out and rest,
 And not work at nothin’ else.

“Orchard ’s where I ’d ruther be—
 Need n’t fence it in fer me—

NATURAL WEALTH

Jes' the whole sky overhead,
And the whole airth underneath.

“Tumble round and souse yer head
In the clover bloom, er pull
Yer straw hat acrost yer eyes
And peek through it at the skies.”

How rich the life that can revel in such simple luxuries; and how true to fact is the poet when he sings:

“O the world is full of roses, and the roses full of dew,
And the dew is full of heavenly love that drips for me
and you.”

How true also to the normal, healthy life are the words which Browning puts into the mouth of David as he sings to the troubled soul of Saul:

“O the wild joys of living. The leaping from rock
up to rock.”
The strong rending of boughs from the fir-tree, the
cool silver shock
Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the hunt of
the bear,
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with
gold dust divine,
And the sleep in the dried river channel where bul-
rushes tell
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly
and well.

HOW TO BE RICH

How good is man's life, the mere living ; how fit
to employ

All the heart and the soul and the senses forever
in joy.''

What untold good would be wrought if this song could be sung effectively in the hearts of all men.

Recently in my reading I came across this base slander on the Almighty :

“ Since all the riches of this world
May be gifts from the devil and earthly things,
I should suspect that I worshiped the devil
If I thanked my God for worldly things.’’

Any one living in God's beautiful world who has eyes and heart to see in it only the work of the devil, is not only lacking in gratitude to the Giver of all good, but is incapable of having fellowship with Him in many of His most marvelous manifestations. That one who does not enjoy the simple, artless beauty of woods and fields, and who does not delight at times in getting away from the artificial glamour and sham of society, has something in his makeup that is abnormal and to be dreaded. He very

NATURAL WEALTH

much needs sanity and balance, and the capacity to know the good when he sees it.

It is high time the Christian world were getting away from the old monkish notion that this world is in itself evil. It is only the man who has gotten out of harmony with nature and with nature's God of whom that can be said. If any part of God's workmanship is to be despised, it is he who by his own choice of evil has lost the divine imprint from his soul. If any taint of evil is to be found in nature it is on his account, and will speedily be remedied when he is again set right with God, and once more finds himself in league with the forces of righteousness.

When we hear any one disparaging the work of God in nature, we have much the same feeling as a friend of ours who took a young lady up to see the splendid view from a high hill near his home. A magnificent stretch of country spread out in every direction. Soul inspiring and thrilling as was the scene, she gave it a momentary glance and went on with her cheap twaddle of

HOW TO BE RICH

conversation, with no more appreciation of it than the cattle grazing on the hillside. She fell far in the estimation of our friend, and deservedly so. His ideal in her was shattered. He was disgusted at the revelation of her smallness of soul.

How immeasurably richer the one who can say with the poets of old: "Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee." "Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God." "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge."

God has given us all things to enjoy, and with which to enrich our lives. He has given us both the world without and the world within, and both alike are His domain. He expects us by using the one to enrich the other and become great. He put man in the garden "To dress and keep it;" and He intended him by gaining dominion over it to prove his kinship with the divine. This world, which saints of a former age thought to be evil only, is on further study found to be an essential part of

NATURAL WEALTH

God's good gifts, to develop and train man in order that he may be truly great.

The new interest and delight that men and women have recently been taking in nature studies, and the pleasure taken in such writings as those of Thoreau, Burroughs, John Muir, and a host of others, is a most encouraging sign of the world's return to sanity and health.

Through the ages nature has been one of the mighty levers by means of which God has lifted man to higher and diviner levels. From the standpoint of material wealth, nature is man's best friend. Not to speak of the wealth that he digs from the soil in the shape of gold and jewels; not to mention the wealth of agricultural products: in a more subtle sense nature enriches by awakening the minds of men to a knowledge of the treasure producing qualities of their environment.

In order to be at his best—to be really rich—man must have greatness of mind, goodness of heart, and the power of achievement. This natural world in a large and important sense is

HOW TO BE RICH

the platform upon which God stands to project these qualities into the minds and hearts of men.

What a blessing it is to the race that after God has filled the world with things of priceless worth, He has not put a fence around them and said, "Hands off!" What a glorious thing it is, too, that He has made it forever impossible for man himself to do that with those things that are most indispensable. If it could by any possibility have been done, man through his monopolies would ere this have gobbled up the air and the sunlight and the beauties of the landscape, and have doled them out in starvation measure to his fellow-beings at an exorbitant rate.

By far too many men are like Thoreau's farmer, who lived on the shore of one of the beautiful New England lakes; "who loved better the reflecting surface of a dollar or a bright cent, in which he could see his own brazen face; who regarded even the ducks which settled in it as trespassers; his fingers grown into crooked and horny talons from the long habit

NATURAL WEALTH

of grasping; who would carry his God to market if he could get anything for him."

Many of nature's riches are enjoyed by the simplest minds without thought and without effort, but others, such as the discovery of the laws of nature and life, and the control of such forces as those of steam and electricity, have come into the possession of men only after they have gained intellectual strength to acquire dominion over them.

Still others of earth's riches we have every reason to believe yet lie about us undiscovered. There are heights and depths in the wealth of God's workmanship here in this world which we have not reached nor of which we have even dreamed. As some one has said, "Glimpses of shadow flit now and again over our mountain peaks of attainment, revealing to us the presence of birds as yet too near the sun for our feeble vision."

When men first came to inhabit the world, their life, their thought, their methods of work must have been very simple and primitive, in-

HOW TO BE RICH

deed. But they found the world around them stimulating to inquiry and suggestive of progress. It has led them on step by step until they have come at least some noticeable distance up the heights. The observation of the regular coming of day and night, summer and winter, rain and sunshine, seed-time and harvest, and a multitude of other things, led man to see that there was plan, thought, intelligence behind the forces of nature. He was led from the beginning to put this and that together and form conclusions. Everything was so constructed as to induce thought.

From the first time he warmed the water in his crude earthen vessels, until the days of Watt and Stephenson, the steam sent up an unheeded challenge for him to harness its slumbering forces. From the first lightning flash that darted like a fiery serpent over the childhood home of the race, the thunders have been crashing over his head as if to break by force through the denseness of his ignorance, and awaken him to the fact that here, too, was a

NATURAL WEALTH

mighty giant, over whom God intended him to have control. As he pitched his tent of bark and built his campfire on the soft, black rock, cropping out of the hillside, he discovered that the rock itself would burn, and thus he learned how to use the condensed vegetable wealth of earlier ages, which a foreseeing and cycle-planning Mind has stored for his use. From the tempest which overturned his tent or rude hut, and which blew him along or retarded his progress as he faced it, he learned to put up his sails and drive his boat over the waters. By the loadstone and the stars he learned to find his path. Finally, by putting together the water and the wood, or the condensed power of the coal into his engine, he learned how to use the power of steam which made him largely independent of tide and wind and current. So, too, he learned how to yoke the horrible giant of the skies, who was supposed to amuse himself by hurling thunderbolts at his enemies, and make him a winged ox to draw his cart.

HOW TO BE RICH

Thus both by the common things of life and by those mighty forces so great as to be practically measureless, yet so delicate as to escape us for ages, we see how God has been leading out the mind of man until he becomes truly a son of the Most High. He has learned from his life with nature that not only a constant energy, but an intelligent, skillful, designing Mind lies back of all things, after whose likeness his own mind has been fashioned. He is learning the plans of the great Designer through familiarity with the workmanship of his hands.

What he has already learned is prophetic of his future. If from the hollow wheat stalk we learn to build our strongest columns, if from the fishes we learn to build our submarines, and from the tiny-winged creatures of the air how to construct our aeroplanes; and if from the artistic forms and colors of flowers our great painters learn their lessons, how much more may we not receive through a still more intimate comradeship with that life which we have too long despised?

NATURAL WEALTH

The very riches of God are ours in fellowship with nature. Wealth undreamed of lies within easy reach of the soul whose eyes are keen and whose mind has not been blunted by the doing of wrong things. As the gains of the past, with all our imperfections, have been marvelous, with truer living and thinking, why may not the progress that is to come rival the wonders of dreamland?

Not only wealth of invention, and progress, and of material good, but wealth of happiness and character are to be found in the fields and woods.

When God wants to train a really great leader, He almost invariably either brings him up in fellowship with nature, or else drives him out, as He did Moses, to where the very bushes are aglow with the divine presence. In the wilderness and the desert and in the mountain solitudes many a man has been made great. It is a remarkable fact that the vast majority of the great minds of the world have been developed amid the solitudes and sweet influences of

HOW TO BE RICH

nature. By far the larger part of the advanced students of to-day were brought up at a distance from the centers of trade and the throngs of great cities. In spite of the advantages and the better opportunity for studying human life, there is something in life amid the crowd that is distracting and unfavorable to continued thought. Life becomes fragmentary, and taken up too much with the trifles of existence. In the quiet and separation incident to country life, there is that which impels the thoughtful mind to great themes. The very lack of other things to engage one, forces the thought outward to nature, and inward upon itself until the soul is brought face to face with the most profound problems that can occupy the minds of men.

Many persons in the city dread the thought of living in the country as they would dread a ghost or a haunted house. They dread it because they can not go there without meeting a ghost of their own real but forgotten selves of which they are afraid—and because nature's

NATURAL WEALTH

quiet walks are haunted by the noiseless footsteps of God Himself as He walks in His garden in the cool of the day—and His presence, too, they want to avoid. These are just the two personages, however, which most people need to meet and become familiar with. When we come to a clear, accurate, and profound knowledge of ourselves, of men, and of God, we have in us the essentials of great leadership.

Nature is not only a teacher but a tonic, not only an instructor but an inspiration to the highest. There is life in the ozone of the forest, and delight to be had in the study of its manifold forms. We know people who have spent their lives in the country, and yet scarcely know the name of a wild flower or a bird, and others who are in such intimate fellowship with its feathered creatures that every bird note is the voice of a well known friend, and every flower is almost as sweet to them as the smile of God.

To know the birds, trees, and flowers as familiar friends is to have opened up to one's

HOW TO BE RICH

soul a never ending source of delight and profit. Some time ago, with a friend, I went for a few days up into the mountains. Leaving the train at a little station among the hills, we were soon climbing the mountain-side. Forest fires were burning although it was April, and we found the whole country for miles had been burned over. All was black and smoking, and with the great rocks heaped in wild confusion, it reminded one of the scenes in Dante's *Inferno*. On past the burned district we went to where miles of budding forest in its primeval grandeur stood untouched alike by the woodman's ax and the ravages of the flames. Along the borders of this vast wilderness, miles from the shriek of the locomotive and the habitations of men, we spent a few days alone with nature. Wading the pure mountain streams; drinking the sparkling, crystal waters of its ice-cold springs; catching glimpses of the speckled beauties inhabiting those unpolluted waters; smelling the fragrance of unfolding buds; listening to the unterrified notes of the forest songsters; and

NATURAL WEALTH

looking into the upturned faces of the flowers, spotless as the untainted air of those solitudes, we found our lives renewed as though we had touched the very sources of life itself, and drank from the fountains of perpetual youth. Here we touched, indeed, the very source of life. As we studied the flowers, some of them new to us, and of uncommon beauty, we could not help but indulge in a train of thought that came almost uninvited. Tennyson wrote:

“ Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all in my hand.
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.”

Yes, little flower, you do not grow for me to-day in the crannied wall, but you teach me life. As I look into your upturned face and search the depths of your very soul with my microscope and find you only more beautiful, you tell me that He who made your beauty and purity wants my life, too, fit to bear close inspection. As I see

HOW TO BE RICH

your companions, differing from you and from each other in form, size, color, fragrance, and in so many other ways, I am reminded that I also differ from my fellows, and that I have no business quarreling with them because of those differences. As I admire your beauty and sweetness in this mountain wilderness, where perhaps no other eyes than mine ever feasted or shall feast on your loveliness, it teaches me that the Wisdom that fashioned you with so much care is not unmindful of my life, which He has made wise enough to understand His own marvelous thought.

When I am reminded, too, that the function of your being is to produce beauty or perfume or fruit, or all of these, from the elements about you, I am forced to the conclusion that my life is intended to produce things of value—that which will be full of beauty and sweetness and worth to men and angels.

Yes, little flower, I am persuaded that the poet wrote the truth. Yet how many people are blind to nature's riches!

NATURAL WEALTH

On returning one evening from a visit to some friends in the country, I observed a hill on the other side of the river that I had not seen before, but which I at once recognized as the highest in the vicinity. Having lived in the community but a short time, I had heard nothing of that hill, but I immediately made up my mind to climb it, sure that such an effort would be worth while. Accordingly, one day when I found sufficient leisure, I crossed the river and after a little search found and ascended that knob. I was not disappointed. Spread out before me was such a glorious view as I had never before looked upon. I shall never forget my sensations as I reached the summit. I felt as if I were standing on the top of the world, and I held my breath lest the fairy wand of that zephyr from the west should sweep me off into space. One hill after another rose before my astonished vision, reaching away in every direction. There was absolutely nothing to obstruct the view, north, south, east, or west, until knobs and peaks were lost in the mists of the

HOW TO BE RICH

distance. Hundreds of square miles of hill and valley lay at my feet, and for the first time in my life I felt as if I were really out of doors. As my soul adjusted itself to its surroundings, I thought what a magnificent spot for the home of a thinker or a poet. The inspiration of such a home would almost make a poet of any man. Yet I found any number of people who had lived all their lives in sight of that hill-top in utter ignorance of it all, never having known what it was to catch the inspiration of the highlands.

So everywhere most people live their little lives in touch with nature, all the while totally unconscious of the wealth that is theirs for the asking. If I but keep my eyes open and my soul alert, by the manifold expression of the thought of her Author, she enriches my being and discloses to me mines of unused treasure.

None of us can afford to miss the wealth of life which comes from an intimate acquaintance and fellowship with nature. Men must at times get out of the shop, the office, the store, the

NATURAL WEALTH

study, and lie close to nature if they would be strong and rich.

“ O what a glory doth this world put on
For him who, with a fervent heart goes forth
Under the bright and glorious sky and looks
On duties well performed, and days well spent.
For him the wind, aye, and the yellow leaves
Shall have a voice, and give him eloquent teaching.

“ If thou art worn and hard beset
With sorrows that thou would'st forget ;
If thou would'st read a lesson that will keep
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep ;
Go to the woods and hills. No tears
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears.”

III. Co-operative Production

“By mutual confidence and mutual aid,
Great deeds are done, and great discoveries made.”

—*Homer.*

“Every great man is always being helped by everybody, for his gift is to get good out of all things and all persons.”

—*Ruskin.*

“I see from my house by the side of the road,
By the side of the highway of life,
The men who press with the ardor of hope,
The men who are faint with the strife.
But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears—
Both parts of an infinite plan—
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend of man.”

—*Sam Walter Foss.*

“Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.”—*Proverbs.*

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

IMPORTANT as are the silent, uplifting influences of nature upon the human spirit, this is but a part of life. Man must both receive and give to be rich. For this reason, if for no other, he must mingle with his fellows. Not only one but many advantages are to be gained by so doing, not only for himself but for others as well.

It is said that in an Italian city stands a beautiful statue of a Greek slave girl; and that one day a little, dirty, ragged child, looking upon it, went home to wash her face. Coming again she saw the neatness of the sculptor's art, and because of it went back, this time to make neat and clean her own attire. So it is that we, seeing the virtues and higher attainments of our fellows, find ourselves lifted in the scale of being. Then we in our turn, whether we will it or no, become benefactors of the race. It can not possibly be otherwise.

HOW TO BE RICH

A stagnant pool may be held in by a dam, but not so a living stream. It will seep through, or run around, or overflow every obstruction put in its path. So the soul that really lives will make itself felt on the lives of others according to its inner quality. It will either scorch and wither, or refresh and give life.

One day I gathered a bunch of beautiful flowers and put them on my study table. A little later I found one of another species, one of the most perfect specimens of its kind I had ever seen, and put it among the others in the same glass of water, thinking I should enjoy its loveliness for at least a week. I was very much surprised to see it droop on its stem, and in an hour or two be withered and ugly. Only one theory could account for it—the first flowers had imparted some quality to the water that meant death to the other.

So it may be in our more complex life.

“ The smallest bark on life’s tumultuous ocean
Will leave a track behind for evermore ;
The lightest wave of influence, once in motion,
Extends and widens to the eternal shore.

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

We should be wary, then, who go before
A myriad yet to be, and we should take
Our bearings carefully where breakers roar
And fearful tempests gather ; one mistake
May wreck unnumbered barks that follow
in our wake."

Small may these influences seem at times, yet they count for much in the final result. In the past one of the most worthless products of the farm has been the dried cornstalks, stripped of foliage, lying about the fields. Now it is discovered that the pulp of this waste material can be turned into the most beautiful white paper, and enough of it to supply the needs of the world. Even so may the odds and ends of our time and influence, which we have regarded as waste material, be turned into products that will enrich the world.

Life can not be rich with the development of all its possibilities without this interaction of personalities on each other. Our business and industrial life to-day is a very complex affair. The success of every undertaking depends upon both money and labor, upon both brain and

HOW TO BE RICH

brawn. The turning out of any machine or other product is dependent upon a multitude of men, each in his particular place doing that part of the work assigned him, and which he understands best how to do. In like manner different branches of industry are dependent upon each other. The iron business depends upon the coal production, and both upon the efficiency of the railroads; the manufacture of clothing upon the productiveness of the farms in cotton and wool; and so on, from top to bottom of our industrial life. Co-operation is absolutely necessary if either the individual or society is to be rich. So it is in our higher life.

As the "Eye can not say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you;" so we can not live our lives independently of each other, "for we are all members one of another."

It was said long ago "it is not good for man to be alone," and the experience of the ages justifies the wisdom of the statement.

A student of rhetoric sat one day before a

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

picture which hung in a recitation room, and upon which he had been required to write a story. It was that of an old castle on the banks of an Eastern river, rearing its grim and solemn walls against the blue sky. In the olden time many a chivalrous footfall had been heard in those halls, and many a fair lady had found safety behind those battlements; but now all is silent there, and we see but the moss-covered old ruin as it crumbles slowly to decay. It offered a fine plot for a story dealing with the life of the former inhabitants, or a sidelight upon the history of the past; and the student wrote out a purely fanciful picture with none of his own personality in it, for he had experienced nothing to make him feel what he wrote.

A year or two later he sat in his room one night, far from home and friends. He was still a student engaged in the struggle for knowledge. Worrying and distracting thoughts ran riot in his brain, and he could not study. He tried for awhile to master the thought of an old Greek writer, but he could not accomplish

HOW TO BE RICH

anything, and finally threw the book on the floor in disgust and took up a Latin author, hoping for better success. He was not in a mood for study, and after a fruitless effort sent the old Roman under the bed to find his comrade—or his enemy, as the case might be—and gave himself to gloomy forebodings of a grim and sarcastic professor scowling at his shrinking form from behind a green table covered with the “classics” his learned head had mastered. He could not help wondering why, if the Greeks were made so great by the study of their own language and literature, we might not be able to achieve at least a reasonable amount of greatness by the study of our own, instead of trying with such a mighty effort to get into their outworn shell.

But a picture lying on his study table sent his thought back again to that one of the old castle. Not that the two pictures were alike, for they had nothing in common; yet something in the secret of his own life coupled the one with the other in his thinking at that particular

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

moment. Another sketch was the result,—a sketch not written out, but traced vividly upon his thought. It was a picture of his own life, and clear and strong because it was a part of himself.

The old and empty walls of the castle suggested to his mind a heart into which no beautiful being had ever come to dwell, and which, as a result, was crumbling to decay. A picture of what until lately seemed probable to his own life. But as he looked at the photo before him he thanked God that his heart had found its occupant, and that the holy place of his soul was no longer left empty. His life had run in a different channel in many respects from most young men, and as it passed before him in his thought that night the picture afforded him a great deal of entertainment. As the angel's brush sketched it for him, there was revealed a barefoot boy on a real country farm far away from the noise and hurry of the world. He was light-hearted and free; but with the first entrance into the schoolroom a fire was kindled

HOW TO BE RICH

in his bosom which was to burn more and more brightly.

A few years later found him day after day and night after night toiling over the musty old volumes of school libraries, and puzzling his brain over things for which he had no definite idea why he toiled,—only the desire to become learned. His nature sometimes rebelled at all this, but still he pressed on, spurred by a restless ambition.

Yet with all this love for books he loved nature as well, and on pleasant evenings and bright sunny days he loved, like the old fly in springtime, to crawl out of the crack or crevice where he had been so long confined and breathe the pure air and bask under the open sky. After a long winter of digging and searching in the mine of scholastic wisdom he would go out, when spring came, into the thick woods and wander through the fields fragrant with sweet flowers, and by the streams which make ever delightful music as they ripple down to the river and sink themselves in its placid bosom. As he

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

mused on these beauties a new beauty came into his life, and his restless soul grew into self-knowledge and contentment.

His thoughtful mood led the thoughtless and trifling companions with whom he spent his earlier years to often pass him by unnoticed; and returning scorn for scorn, he was compelled to plod on alone, without any real friends. There were many in the world whom he could have made very delightful companions, but, through the unfortunate limitations of his environment, he was out of touch with them at this critical period of his life, and was in danger of becoming a recluse. But as he studied nature and looked through nature to her God, he found a friend in both, and his heart came more and more into sympathy with the great world about him. He acquired a great love for these strolls amid the quietness and beauty of nature, and would sit sometimes on a fallen tree in the forest and watch the transparent waters of the brook or listen to its music as it wound itself like a silver serpent through the valley, or at other

HOW TO BE RICH

times lie on a mossy bank, lost in thought and reverie. Sometimes, when in a more sociable mood, he would take a friend with him, or even take a row on the beautiful little lake near the village, and himself pull the oars, while a fair and more delicate hand guided the rudder. He still failed to find the companionship for which his soul longed, yet he was coming to believe much in the living, active world about him.

At length, when he had come into closer connection with human life through his chosen profession, one spring, as he gathered the arbutus and the anemones of the wood, he permitted his eyes to rest upon a flower of different genus, and his heart welled up within him, and tears came to his eyes. He was naturally of a sympathetic nature, and his affections were widened and deepened by the experience, for it was the sweetest flower the world had thus far yielded him. He was a man of keen sensibilities and strong passions. Especially was he a lover of the virtuous and the beautiful, and when any

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

object presented itself to his mind as the embodiment of both, he must of necessity be strongly drawn toward that object. Such a being in human form had passed before the sensitive plate of his soul, and by a strange, sweet light had left her image there, engraven in lines of indescribable delicacy and beauty. As he, like the old castle, had stood half apart from the real present-day life of the world, the light of that sweet face had fallen upon him, and a pair of bright eyes had looked into his with an air of trusting confidence and tenderest love from beneath a mass of dark hair, and he by that experience had been lifted out of the past into a new existence. Her influence was like a benediction upon him. All things he looked upon were pure if he but thought of her. He loved her because of this purifying and uplifting influence, and breathed a prayer that it might ever continue. He had fully become a man among men, henceforth to be touched by all those influences that stir and mold manhood into its best.

HOW TO BE RICH

Thus it is by the loves and friendships and the various associations of life that the lives of men and women are mellowed, modified, and enriched.

The life lived apart from the crowd, however rich in itself, is only half a life. We need the companionship of others to bring out the full glory and greatness of our humanity—to be indeed rich as the Author of life intended. Contact with other minds is necessary to cure our crudeness and eccentricities.

Yet society is wrong in demanding that all the corners be smoothed off. We need to come up against some sharp corners now and then, to jolt us back to sense and true life. We need to remember that there is such a thing as right and wrong. A man may be none the less a gentleman because he stands uncompromisingly for the right. He is neither a true man nor a friend of society if he does not.

Cultivate as many deep, warm, abiding friendships as possible, if they be with the people who are themselves rich in the qualities of noble life.

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

The parent very soon discovers as the little ones go out of the home to choose their companions, the enriching or impoverishing character of life's friendships. These co-operative forces are exerted most powerfully, however, in the home. The home exerts the deepest influence on life. We who have passed the formative period of life know what a large part the life and thought—the atmosphere—of the old home had in making us what we are. We who are parents may think sometimes that the impressions we have tried to make count for but little; but they are vastly more important than we dream.

Careful investigation, made by one of our State Young Men's Christian Associations, has furnished evidence that where both parents are Christians seventy-eight per cent of the young men become Christians. Where only one parent is a Christian but thirty per cent follow the better example. And where neither parent is a Christian scarcely five per cent of the boys become such. Were the influence in every case all

HOW TO BE RICH

that it ought to be, it is safe to say that nine in every ten of the young men would choose the way of Christ, with all the richness of life that this means.

We are all well aware that there are those who object to childhood religion, and who insist on allowing the child to "grow up and choose for himself." But a little reflection must convince us that such an attitude is one of the most unworthy things of which any parent can be guilty. We enjoy the innocence and purity of the little life or lives which God has sent into our homes, and with which He has entrusted us; and by such a course refuse to give them the best in return. The ministry of childhood is a blessed thing. Frank L. Stanton very beautifully and tenderly touches upon it in one of his poems. Coming out of the shadow of a great trial, he says:

" A little hand stole softly
Into my own that day,
When it needed the touch that I loved so much,
To strengthen me on my way.

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

“ Softer it seemed than the softest down
On the breast of the gentlest dove ;
But its timid press and its faint caress
Were strong in the strength of love.

“ It seemed to say in a strange, sweet way,
I love you and understand ;
And calmed my fears as my hot heart-tears
Fell over that little hand.

“ Perhaps there are tenderer, sweeter things
Somewhere in that sun-bright land,
But I thank God for His blessing
In the clasp of that little hand.”

That one who is blessed of God in the touch of a little hand, and who does not direct that hand in the doing of that which is best, deserves the severest things the universe of God is capable of meting out to him.

Even the birds and the beasts lead their young to those things which they have found to be the best ; and shall not man, who has a higher intelligence, do as well ? It would not enter our thought to say in regard to our little one's intellectual training, “Let him grow up and choose for himself whether he wants to read or not.” The experience of mankind has taught us that

HOW TO BE RICH

education is a good thing; therefore we insist on giving the child the best possible training in that direction. The experience of the race has taught likewise, and with even greater emphasis, that every life needs moral balance and to be well grounded in the virtues of Christian character or it will inevitably fall short of the best things. And yet, when it is suggested that we give some direction on these most important things, some people throw up their hands in horror and exclaim, "It will never do; you must let him grow up and choose for himself."

Some people seem to think if you train up a child in the way he should not go, when he is old he will be sure to come out all right. Nevertheless we much prefer the older statement of the case, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

We are "old foggy" enough to still believe that God's Word contains some good advice. If we could grow up without any bias one way or the other, there might be a little show of

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

sense in such statements; but as we actually find things, the idea is utterly senseless. Evil influences are exerted from the very dawning of consciousness. Demons of passion, impurity, and vice in a thousand forms reach out their long, gaunt, horrible hands to grasp that innocent, trusting little life and drag it down. That parent is little better than a demon who will not interpose strong arms, yea, who will not throw life itself between the sweet purity of that precious life and these worst of all enemies.

God has set mankind in families in order that the young might be protected by the power and experience of their elders, and that the enriching influence of association with other minds might have an opportunity to work out its best possible results. Because of these things, as well as for their own sakes, young men and women must needs be very careful about choosing those who are to help make home for themselves and their children. Success or failure, joy or misery for all the future is wrapped up in that little decision which is often made so

HOW TO BE RICH

triflingly,—as if the whole thing were a joke. But also in the every-day intercourse of life all kinds of people are of value to us if we know how to use them. I do not mean this expression in the usual sense of the day—that is detestable. Nothing can be more hideous in the sight of God than the dominant note in modern business. To care nothing for a man but for what I can squeeze out of him in dollars and cents; to force from him the largest possible amount of service, regardless of his physical, mental, or moral welfare, and give him in return, however excellent his services, the least possible amount of compensation,—is to set one's self in direct opposition to the spirit and message of Jesus. He made, not what I can get out of a man, but what I can add to his life, the supreme test of what I am. We are well aware that a multitude of business men sneer at the mention of the precepts of Jesus, but we ought not to overlook this fact also, that “upon whomsoever this stone shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”

Some men treat the whole matter of what

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

Christ taught on these points with a supercilious air of condescension, as much as to say, "If Christ taught anything contrary to the ideas of business life, so much the worse for Christianity." Let us never forget the truth, taught not only by the Word of God, but by the experience of the ages as well, that if modern business methods—try to shoulder the blame on "soulless corporations" or what you will—do not line up with the teachings and the spirit of Christ, so much the worse for modern business. Our civilization is doomed as sure as God rules.

We can, if we will, get from others far better things than material wealth. We can so use their life's influence on ours as to be richer in character thereby. There are no greater riches in life than the precious companionship of kindred spirits. Sweetheart, lover, husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother, brother, sister, friend,—how much of the wealth of life is wrapped up in these. Yet it is well to remember that our influence on each other depends not on our agreements alone, but also on our

HOW TO BE RICH

disagreements. A friend who is just like me in all his thoughts and tastes may be agreeable to me because he flatters my vanity; but the friend who by his differences from me stirs me to better things is by far the more valuable.

The secret of wealth from this source is in cultivating the society of those above us and in striving to emulate them. Whatever you do, don't drift. Choose your company, and do not allow circumstances to do it for you.

Neither should we overlook the fact that even enemies are at times a blessing, as they point out the way for us to the best by revealing the flaws in our character and work, and thus stirring us to nobler endeavor. These contacts, even with the uncongenial and the evil, if we use them properly, are an important source of wealth not to be despised. Instead of objecting, we ought to rejoice in the fact that the rubs of life make us great. Even those who try to injure are co-operating with God's plans for our enrichment, without realizing it. But let us drop at once any fellowship, how-

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION

ever valuable otherwise, that is exerting a deleterious influence on the quality of our life.

Rich is the life to which the words of Longfellow are applicable:

“When a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men.”

IV. Silent Partners

“All that mankind has done, thought, gained, or been, is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of books. The true university of these days is a collection of books.”—*Carlyle*.

“All around the room my silent servants wait,
My friends in every season bright and dim.”
—*Proctor*.

“A great poem is a fountain forever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight.”—*Shelley*.

“And here the singer for his Art
Not all in vain may plead ;
The song that nerves a nation's heart
Is in itself a deed.”
—*Tennyson*.

“For a jollie goode booke whereon to looke,
Is better to me than golde.”
—*Old English Song*.

SILENT PARTNERS

ONE of the richest sources of enjoyment to the human mind is afforded by the world of books. All the phases of life and thought and all the reaches of knowledge and of imagination are here put at the service of the one who is disposed to look for them.

Books are real partners in the development of the latent wealth of our being. As Sir John Lubbock has well said: "A library is true fairyland. Here we may read the most important histories, the most exciting volumes of travels and adventures, the most interesting stories, the most beautiful poems; we may meet the most eminent statesmen, poets, philosophers; benefit by the ideas of the greatest thinkers, and enjoy the grandest creations of human genius."

In books we have the accumulated wisdom, knowledge, and experience of the past laid up as in a storehouse. God has given us these as

HOW TO BE RICH

He has all His other good gifts, in order that we may use them and by that use enrich life.

Yet it is astonishing how many young men and women know nothing of good literature. Many scarcely read anything at all, and but a small part of those who do are in the habit of reading authors whose works stand high enough to rank as literature.

If it is a sin to neglect and misuse our bodies, it is none the less a sin to ignore and starve the intellect or feed it on husks. As the intellect is the pathfinder to what is best along all the highways and byways of life, it is not only our duty, but to our highest interest from every point of view, to train it to the fullest possible extent. When we see how many neglect this privilege we do not wonder at their moral and spiritual degradation. When our intellectual and literary tastes range no higher than the records of the criminal and divorce courts as found in the average newspaper, it can not be expected that our lives be worth much from any lofty standpoint.

SILENT PARTNERS

God has given us books, that we may gain thereby broader and more correct ideas of life and duty and do better work in every phase of our experience than would otherwise be possible to us.

He who can read English holds the key to the untold treasures of the ages; and no difference how poor he may be, if he has a library of good books he has in them a mine of wealth and joy. They bring to us the best thought of the greatest minds of the world, not only in our own time, but through all time. They entertain, instruct, guide, and lift us into higher realms of truth, goodness, and beauty. If we could have the privilege and honor of inviting to our homes, to converse with us, all the great thinkers of the world, how inestimable a privilege would we consider it. Yet we can go into our libraries and be at once admitted to the company of heroes, sages, and poets of all ages and nations. Some of them will relate to us the marvelous history and the beautiful legends and traditions of the past. Some will reveal to us

HOW TO BE RICH

the secrets of nature and show us wonderful visions of the future. Others will carry us over seas and continents, and spread out before us the charming scenery and the quaint manners and customs of the world. Still others unfold for us the will of God and human duty, and plant within our souls longings after the eternal "Beauty of Holiness." Yet, how lightly do many esteem these privileges. Many an hour is wasted in common gossip and loafing, which might be improved by enjoying the sights of Europe with Bayard Taylor; or watching the thrilling scenes of the chariot races of old Rome with Wallace; or in contemplating the wonders of ancient civilization with Hutson or Rawlinson; or with Mitchel soaring through the infinite depths of heaven; with Lowell sucking the sweets of nature as he lies under the willows; listening to Emerson discoursing on the philosophy of life; or to Milton singing of Paradise.

To some these things mean nothing, as they have not cultivated their taste in this direction.

SILENT PARTNERS

As the person who associates with the uncultivated and vulgar can not enjoy the society of the educated and refined, so it is in literature. There is such a thing as caste in the world—in the great fundamentals of life—whether we like the idea or not. All the protests in the world can not change the fact. If we associate with the lower class and make them our bosom friends, our company will be spurned by the great writers who stand as high priests and kings in the domain of letters.

As we would be careful in our selection of friends, so should we be of our books. We can not touch smut in either the social, moral, or mental worlds without being blackened by it. We can not walk in the society of either persons or books that are evil and not be tainted. As it is no satisfactory apology for our keeping company with disreputable people to say that we like them, so it is not in our choice of books. Taste is something that can be, and ought to be cultivated. By practice Emerson may become more enjoyable vacation reading than the most

HOW TO BE RICH

empty-headed novelist of the hour, and the poets most delightfully refreshing and helpful.

There are so many really good books to-day that we must select, and select very discriminatingly, to get the best for our time and effort. Only the books that are of the very first rank in their particular field should be allowed to occupy our time. Get something of the best along as many different lines of culture and thought as possible, in order that life may be both broadened and deepened.

But, whatever else we neglect, we can not safely omit the one Book which by common consent stands first in all the literature of the nations and the ages. "It contains," as some one has said, "the most ancient history, the most interesting biography, the grandest philosophy, and the most sublime and beautiful poetry that ever was written."

Of the almost countless number of volumes that pour from the world's presses to-day only a very few can be classed as real literature. The reader is at times bewildered as to what

SILENT PARTNERS

he shall select from the mass,—as to what is really worth the reading. So many different standards of value are set up that he is at a loss to know how to form his conclusions.

There is a class of books which deals with things and which have been called books of knowledge. There is another class, quite different, which deals with life; these have been called books of power. The real books of power are the books which the world has agreed to call literature. These are the world's strongest and most refreshing springs of mental and spiritual being.

Strange as it may seem to those who have experienced the power of the Word of God, there are those who would exclude the religious from any place in literature. They prate about "art for art's sake," and hold that the distinguishing quality of literature consists in the power to give a certain kind of pleasure with which morality has nothing to do. Anything, therefore, which has in it a glimmer of moral or spiritual light which may dispel some of the

HOW TO BE RICH

world's darkness, arouses their special ire. In their "literary" moods such writing lies so far beneath their exalted vision as to be altogether unseen. A great many readers, if we are to judge by their practice, indorse this notion of what is literary. They are like the young lady who went to the theater recently to hear the dramatization of a popular book. In speaking of it to a friend she declared, enthusiastically: "It was just splendid. You know the book is a religious book, but of course the religion was left out." So these critics would strike out of literature everything which is suggestive of spiritual tone.

In direct antagonism to all such theories we maintain that the infusion of the thought and life of the divine is absolutely essential to the production of the world's greatest literature. The best critics agree that literature is life—life in its deepest and richest experiences. Emerson says, "It is a record of the best thoughts." Matthew Arnold says: "The end and aim of literature is a criticism of life. It is the inter-

SILENT PARTNERS

pretation of the natural world and the moral world. A poetry of revolt against moral ideas is a poetry of revolt against life. A poetry of indifference toward moral ideas is a poetry of indifference toward life." Mr. Mabie makes this comment, "Life realized, embodied, and interpreted is the first test of literature." Recognizing the fact that the fountains of all action lie in the emotions of the heart, Professor Winchester, whose work on literary criticism is recognized as one of the very best things of its kind, says, "Emotion is the characteristic and distinguishing element in literature;" and "moral emotion is of higher literary value than purely sensuous or esthetic emotion."

Therefore, as literature is an interpretation of life, an interpretation of the human heart, put in the best possible form, how are we to exclude religion, which is one of the most universal and powerful influences of life. As all phases of human experience are an integral part of the materials of literature, and he who leaves out any is narrow to just that extent, surely he

HOW TO BE RICH

who would leave religion with its deepest, most vital, and also most beautiful of all the facts of the soul out of his consideration must be narrow indeed. In the great truths about God, the moral order, and immortality lie the real secret and heart of the deepest and best life.

It is true in all phases of human effort that in our work we give to the world an incarnation, more or less perfect, of the ideal which has stirred our souls. Of all those influences which have brought out the very best that is known to human nature, Christ stands in the supreme place of power. To say that these influences must have no place in literature would be to deny to it the most characteristic elements of what we claim to be its essential quality.

A recent history of American literature severely criticises one of our well-known writers and is not willing to allow him any place at all in literature. The author is especially sarcastic in speaking of his poems on Bible themes—poems some of which, we venture to say, will live when even the name of the critic is for-

SILENT PARTNERS

gotten. Because that critic may never have risen high enough in his own experience to have felt such aspirations as these poems express, is no reason why he should deny their reality. Others have risen to the sublimity of such things, and his narrowness and lack of experience are not to be the final measure of the breadth of the literature of human life. And so it is with the hymns of the Church—which an obscure professor of something somewhere has called “doggerel.” While a great many of the cheap song books of recent years have not been all that could have been desired, the great hymns of the Church have, many of them, been the product of the best thought in the crises of great lives, and belong to the world’s noblest and most vital literature.

It has been said that there are two things back of every flower which are absolutely necessary to its beauty and fragrance—the earth and the sky. These delicate products of nature would not be the delightful things they are without the combined ministries of both. The up-

HOW TO BE RICH

per sky is as essential as is the earth. So it is with the best in literature—it can not be produced except the luminous beauty of the upper sky of spiritual truth rest upon it. One of England's keenest judges of what is best in the literary world makes this criticism of Heine: "Heine had all the culture of Germany; in his head fermented all the ideas of modern Europe. Yet, what have we got from him? A half result, for want of moral balance and of nobleness of soul and character. To be great a man must have something in him that can influence character. He must have a noble and lofty character himself." We can have no better guide than this in the selection of our books—choose those which are the expression of men and women of character. Every great book is the outgrowth and the expression of a great life.

That one quality of literature is to give pleasure no one will deny; but, after all, this does not represent its highest value to mankind. Its greatest value is to be found in its teaching quality. We are well aware that there are those

SILENT PARTNERS

who will deny that literature is, or ought to be, a teacher ; yet their denial does not change the truth. All students of literature are practically agreed that there are a few great books—which can perhaps be numbered on the fingers—which are of more worth to the world than all that remains of what we call literature. This is true because they teach life with its deepest truths, as all the other books of the world do not. Some of these great works of literature are not religious, in the ordinary sense of that term, yet they exhibit in their own lines of thought vital truth—and all truth is God's thought.

After all, then, we must agree that the chief virtue of literature lies in the power to impart to human life its great lessons. While prosaic moralizing and "preaching" have no place in literature, yet the development of the religious in life has. The richest music of the soul can not be produced without this phase of life.

No minister who understands the depth and riches of his message can do his work and think

HOW TO BE RICH

his thought without at times realizing that he has touched on the borderland of more beautiful poetry than ever was written.

We believe the world's best literature has not yet been written. When it is written it will be a revelation, such as the world has not yet seen, of the whole soul in all its relations and aspirations, with the religious—the divine—pervading it all and holding its rightful first place.

If literature be an interpretation of life, and religion represents that which is richest and best in life, we must accord it necessarily the highest place in literature. Otherwise we must withdraw its claim to first place in life.

To sum up in a sentence the place of religion in literature, we know of no better statement of it than that of H. W. Mabie in his essay on Browning: "Abt Vogler touches his organ keys, and straightway an invisible temple springs, arch upon arch, in the vision of his imagination, and through it as through the Beautiful Gate of the older shrine he passes into the presence of One who is the Builder and Maker of houses not

SILENT PARTNERS

made with hands. To reach that Presence, to make it real and abiding in the thoughts of men, is the true office and service of art."

We would not have any confine their reading to one book or to one aspect of life, however great and good that one may be, but we plead for the best, and only the best.

Different lines of reading fit into our different moods, and all in their way contribute their treasures to our life.

Whether it be Dante's vision of hell or St. John's vision of heaven; Shelley's "Arethusa" and "The Cloud" or Homer's gory battlefields of Troy; Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha" or the Psalms of the Hebrew faith; the science of Darwin or the child-songs of Eugene Field,—all are woven, by life's golden loom, into the glorious pattern of our lives.

If we get all possible from these silent, unassuming partners of our life we will have succeeded in pouring into our being another of those enriching streams whose influence shall abide with us forever.

V. The Master Spirit

“ Be admonished not to strike leagues of friendship with cheap persons, where no friendship can be. Our impatience betrays us into rash and foolish alliances which no God attends. By persisting in your path, though you forfeit the little you gain the great. You demonstrate yourself so as to put yourself out of the reach of false relations, and you draw to you the first born of the world,—those rare pilgrims whereof only one or two wander in nature at once, and before whom the vulgar great show as spectres and shadows merely. ‘The infallible index of true progress is found in the tone the man takes. Neither his age, nor his breeding, nor company, nor books, nor actions, nor talents, nor all together, can hinder him from being deferential to a higher spirit than his own. If he have found his center the Deity will shine through him.’ ”—*Emerson*.

“ ’T is the weakness in strength that I cry for ; my flesh that I seek

In the Godhead. I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be.

A Face like my face that receives thee ; a Man like to me,

Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever : a Hand like this hand

Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee. See the Christ stand.”

—*Browning*.

“ Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”—*1 John 1: 3*.

THE MASTER SPIRIT

TO POSSESS the best in music, art, or literature, one must fellowship with the masters. So if we would enjoy all the manifold riches that our being is capable of knowing and that life is able to yield, we must be not only on speaking terms but intimate in our companionship with the world's Master Spirit.

Both nature and the Book of God assure us that such an experience is within our reach. Approached in the right way, the knowledge and fellowship of God is the most attractive thing in the world. One writer said, long ago: "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. Yea, He is altogether lovely." We have read that "no man can look upon His face and live," and have perhaps misinterpreted the meaning of those words. We have thought of Him as distant, forbidding,

HOW TO BE RICH

awful. We should not so read His message. Paul speaks of Him as “dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen or can see.” Yet in another place He tells us that we *shall* see Him, and that “face to face.” And He speaks of such experiences as the sum of all delights.

In the same mood writes John: “We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” “They shall need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Therefore we must interpret Him in a manner entirely different from what we had thought. It is like this: no one can gaze upon the beauty and glory of His face and see the full majesty and charm and perfection of His character, and *care* to return to the common-place

THE MASTER SPIRIT

and unattractive of this world. If His beauty should burst upon us through the fog and the mist, it would, like a mighty magnet, draw us at once and forever to himself.

And why should it not be thus? There are things in this world in which the soul delights. Among these are power, majesty, beauty, purity. In our best moments we love them.

We love power and admire its manifestations. Even the street-corner loafer with his microscopic intellect admires physical power, and so he delights to talk of the prize-fighter and other such "fellows of the baser sort" who amuse him and his like by the display of brute force. This is the love of power in one of its very lowest forms; yet that love in one form or another is universal to human nature.

The great characters who belong to the heroic age of every nation were loved because they were men of power, able to perform unusual and unheard of tasks. Is the same thing not true to-day? The deeds of the Spanish-American War, which so thrilled us and stirred

HOW TO BE RICH

the patriotism and pride of the Nation, were unusual deeds of physical prowess, the like of which had scarcely been heard of in the history of the world. They seemed quite as wonderful as many of the miracles of Jewish history.

We reverence the swish and rumble of the steam engine, and the power, both physical and mental, which it represents.

Since we love and admire the man of might and the manifestations of power, why not look about us for expressions of this quality in the touch of the finger of God? "He looketh upon the earth, and it trembleth; He toucheth the hills, and they smoke." Perhaps the most striking manifestation of physical power in the world we inhabit is seen in the earthquake which turns rivers from their courses, sinks mountains into the sea, and swallows up great cities. But these displays of power are puny when compared with others of which we know out among the stars.

We are well aware that external displays of power are less wonderful than the Force behind them, and of which they are but the ex-

THE MASTER SPIRIT

pression. We can not suppose for an instant that He who shakes the foundations of the earth, and opens up the yawning chasms of the sun, and swings millions of worlds in their orbits, spends His power or exhausts Himself in so doing. Rather has He infinite reserve force. He who holds a sun dazzling in splendor in one hand has the steadiness of nerve, the delicacy of touch to fashion with the other the tender outlines and the velvety surface of the petals of the rose. He suffers not the slightest exhaustion by the doing of these titanic tasks, but has the leisure at the same time to add with exquisite touch the color and fragrance to these flowers.

Surely the lover and admirer of power can find his satisfaction in God.

We love not only power, but majesty, which is the vesture or the garment of power. The darkness and the fierce aspect of the thunder-cloud speak to us of the power about to sweep the earth. The rugged and awful cliffs and chasms of the mountains and their mighty peaks.

HOW TO BE RICH

speak to us of the force that lifted them above the plain. One who lately had the experience tells us of the awe inspired by the grandeur of the scene as he lay under a clump of trees on the brink of the Grand Cañon of the Colorado, looking down into that frightful chasm the greater part of a mile in depth.

Whatever there is of the sublime and the majestic in the world speaks but of the greater glory and majesty of Him whose hand formed these awe-inspiring scenes.

Again, how the world overflows with beauty! Out in the country the other evening, lying on the grass, a rich carpet of verdure spread out before me. Just beyond was a road with an old-fashioned worm fence on either side; then an orchard with a wavy bank of deeper green; beyond that, to the right, was a field of golden wheat perfectly ripened and ready for the reaper, and to the left a hillside covered with the light green of oats just bursting into head. Back of all, and running around the horizon, was an oak forest clothed in the

THE MASTER SPIRIT

very richest of dark green. Above, the sky was rich with indescribable beauty. The sky itself shaded from deep blue overhead to pale opal at the horizon. The clouds above were white and soft and fluffy like a newly-shorn fleece, the whiteness changing gradually to a deep purple as they approached the sunset. Back of these, at a higher altitude, was another strata of clouds glowing in the most brilliant tints of gold. No painting could portray its loveliness. It was a scene worthy the vision of angels. It seemed to me the easiest thing in the world to make those bars of cloud a ladder by which to mount into the very presence chamber of the still more beautiful Being who had painted these inexpressible glories.

How full the world is of like things to be enjoyed, if we have but eyes to behold them! The forest aisles, the mountains, the prairie, the sea, the flowers and gems of earth, the sweetness of human faces,—a thousand things of beauty and delight. As I have enjoyed these glorious things I have often thought how ex-

HOW TO BE RICH

ceedingly beautiful must be the mind, the spirit, the soul of Him from whom all this loveliness is but an emanation. What esthetic taste, what an artist, in short, what a marvelously perfect Being must be that One who fashioned all these things! Surely we are ready to say with Solomon, "My Beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely."

The human heart pays homage to virtue and purity even when too degraded and abandoned to seek these qualities for itself. Look into the face of heaven's blue and into the hearts of the flowers, and tell me if He who made them could be otherwise than pure. Read the Book, and tell me if He who gave it to the world could Himself be aught but holy.

No critic can find other quality than whiteness in the character of Jesus. Some one has called Him the Poet of the Ages, because He had not only perfect power of self-expression, but because He was in His own personality the consummation of all virtue and goodness. No other companion can claim to be altogether

THE MASTER SPIRIT

lovely. Jesus is, and He invites us into His fellowship.

No other so glorious message ever fell upon the ears of men as that Almighty Wisdom and Power had stooped in the Father spirit of love to human ignorance and weakness. No finer lesson can be learned to-day, and none is more needed by the world than that of the Emmaus road. Familiar to us as the songs of childhood is the story of the walk to that village among the Judean hills,—the discouraged disciples, and the quiet of the evening along that country road; the encounter with the Stranger, and the conversation by the way; the invitation to tarry with them, the evening meal, and the revelation of His divine personality. A beautiful story it is, rich in suggestiveness for our own lives, enforcing the much-needed truth that at unexpected times and in unexpected ways the Master of Life speaks to the soul.

“ One great Voice august
Is speaking always in this world of men ;
Speaking direct—no need of word or pen—
Mystic and yet so clear.

HOW TO BE RICH

“ Do you hear a Voice
Calling sweetly, softly through the years ;
Through the wrong and sorrow, through the tears
Of a wasted life ?

“ Have you heard a Voice
Resonant in times of hot, mad sin,
When the chalice of the heart within
Dripped with poisoned wine ?

“ Have you heard a Voice
Whispering sadly as the soul stoop'd down,
Groveling to some baseness—its fair crown
Dimm'd and blurr'd with shame ?

“ Have you heard a Voice
Calling gladly as the soul arose,
Patient and strong, brave to endure all blows
In this world's strife ?
Looking up to heaven with quiet smile,
Feeling some omnipotence the while,
Bearing up the life ?

“ 'T is the Voice of God,
Sweet, appealing, as in Eden's grove ;
Sternly warning in His righteous love,
'T is the Father's Voice.

“ Ay, the Father's Voice,
Calling ever, always, through the years,
Through all wrong and sorrow—through all tears—
Calling His children home.”

God does not speak always in the same way.
By diverse methods did He make known His

THE MASTER SPIRIT

will to the fathers. So must the sons find it in their experience.

He spoke to His people in the olden time by means of the significant things in their national history and the important events in their own lives, by different methods of approach and through various types of men.

He could not be known by any fixed and familiar garb. His messages came to them in the crises of their national life, as at the Red Sea and at Jericho, like as to us they came at Saratoga, Gettysburg, and Manila; they were heard in the sacrifices of their tabernacle and temple ritual, and in the clarion voice of the prophets calling their brethren to the highlands of God. He spoke to Moses in the mighty thunderings of Sinai, and to Abraham in the ominous mutterings and the smoke and stench of Sodom; while to Elijah, the vehement whirlwind prophet, He came in the still small voice after the earthquake, the tempest, and the fire. In awful terror did He come to Ahab, and to Belshazzar in the handwriting on the wall;

HOW TO BE RICH

while like a benediction from the skies and as the dew from heaven did the vision of the New Jerusalem descend upon the gentle soul of the beloved disciple on the barren shores of Patmos. To Paul He came in dazzling light too strong for human vision, and to Zacharias in the darkness of a supernatural night.

Through radically different types of men did the heavenly Voice find its way to human hearts. It came in the culture and learning of Moses, Solomon, and Paul; and in Elijah and John the Baptist with their coarse attire and the blunt manners of the wilderness. Through the zephyr-like spirit of a John and the ocean storms of Peter's tempestuous soul.

How foolish the man who looks for slavish uniformity in an infinite God dealing with a many-sided and variety-loving humanity created in His own image! Yes, God spake to men in the olden time. And not the least precious of those communings was that of the wayside fellowship of friend with friend, as on the Emmaus road. But the larger truth for us lies in

THE MASTER SPIRIT

the fact that God did not cease to speak to man when the fathers passed away, or when the Son of God went back to the eternal mansions. He said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

"God is not dumb, that He should speak no more.

If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And findest not Sinai—'t is thy soul is poor ;
There towers the mountain of the Voice no less,
Which who so seeks shall find,—but he who bends
Intent on Manna still and mortal ends,
Sees it not,—neither hears its thundered lore."

Musing along life's way we find much to enjoy in nature, literature, art, music, worship, and the routine of our daily work. Through all the experiences of life God speaks. These are but streams from the eternal fountain that lead up to their source, as rivers traced back lead up to their springs in the mountain heights far above us. If any of these things ravish us, how much more must He who excels in glory!

A thousand-fold more blessed for us will it be if, loving any of these humble or exalted sources of enjoyment, we follow the voice that

HOW TO BE RICH

so thrills till it leads us to the foot of God's throne.

Emerson says in the introduction of one of his books: "The foregoing generations beheld God face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight, and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs?"

We should have, and we can have if we will. Let us not treat lightly life's wayside experiences. Here often we will find our hours of richest fellowship with God. How unexpectedly we often meet Him along life's dusty high-road or in the evening walk as we loiter by the way.

Some one has said, "Life is fed by unseen streams quite as fully and constantly as by those streams whose courses science traces with admirable accuracy and precision."

Starting for a long trip on the train on a disagreeable day in March, I first went into a

THE MASTER SPIRIT

bookstore and bought a book. Whirling along on the train, as a heavy blanket of wet snow fell outside, I read a delightful description of the bursting into bloom of an apple orchard. I could see the clear blue of the sky with its white clouds, and smell the fragrance of expanding buds. With things like these, and the thoughts they suggested, I enjoyed as rich a heaven in that railway car as I ever expect to experience this side of the reality. I shall long remember that day, because my heart indeed burned within me as I talked with God.

Music can touch all the chords of life and lift the soul above that which is material as few other things can.

Sitting with closed eyes and attentive ear one Saturday afternoon in Carnegie Music Hall, listening to the notes as they swelled and flowed from the great organ, my soul seemed swayed by a divine inspiration. It seemed to me that I caught a thrill of melody breathed out through heaven-tuned instruments from a band of angels gathered on the banks of the River of



HOW TO BE RICH

Life. Then came a deep, subdued, yet sublime burst of music from off somewhere among those shining mansions. Then the two companies of musicians seemed to approach each other, and their music to blend in perfect harmony. And then came a bewildering flow of silvery sound as though one of the chariots of God were returning from the conflict with the powers of darkness in triumph, making music as it came up the steeps. I could hear it as it came up from the depths below, the notes of melody swelling out clearer and sweeter upon the air; up through the gates of pearl, and over the streets of gold glittering in the full blaze of the Sun of Righteousness, until its soul-thrilling melody blended before the throne with the triumphant strains of the assembled hosts of heaven. Ere the music of one triumph had ceased there came another and another, each received with the same glad welcome, until my heart overflowed and my eyes filled with tears.

In one of those chariots was borne the rescued soul of one who had on earth possessed a

THE MASTER SPIRIT

wonderful mind, and had swayed multitudes by the power of his genius. In another was the immortal nature of one who had received great wealth, and who had enjoyed every advantage of culture and refinement the world could offer. In another was borne one who had gone far astray, and had been brought back by a gentle touch of the Savior's loving hand. In still another was a little white-robed figure with radiant face, hardly recognizable at first—a little waif, but a moment ago with ragged dress and shivering form and tear-stained face, crushed to death in a city street, to be buried in a nameless grave—but now recognized and received by the great loving Savior, who never forgets the least or the poorest of His children. And the music of one welcome was just as sweet and just as wonderful as that of any of the others.

I did not know, nor did it much concern me, what that music meant to anybody else that day, but such was its message to me.

It was not a studied affair, but came sponta-

HOW TO BE RICH

neously, without any effort on my part, as I listened to the notes of that organ. As I left the room, after the music had ceased, I realized the power of music as never before, and I felt that God Himself had spoken to my soul.

I knew a young man some little time ago to visit Washington. Among other places of interest he went to the Corcoran Gallery of Arts. The thing which most impressed him there was Powers' "Greek Slave." That beautiful piece of sculpture, which to some might have meant a very different thing or nothing at all, was to him a clear call to pure life. A beautiful girl, seized by heartless soldiery, stripped of her clothing, her wrists and ankles in chains—a girl as delicate and sweet as a new-blown flower—it stirred all the chivalry of his being; and he said, deep down in his soul, "The brute who would offer any indignity to that fresh young life or who would dare even in thought to befoul such angel-like purity ought to be instantly scorched by the withering fires of the lowest hell." Through the appreciation of that

THE MASTER SPIRIT

work of art God had spoken to his soul with a mighty voice.

The capacity to see in other souls the qualities of purity and beauty that stir the deepest emotions, is a mark of our relationship to God Himself.

Who that has the soul of a man can read "The Gardener's Daughter" of Tennyson and see that figure

" Gowned in pure white—
Suffused with blushes,—neither self possessed
Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and that
Divided into a graceful quiet,"

as she holds aloft the rosebush blown down by the gale, herself as delightful and charming as those dewy roses, and not feel that God was speaking a message of power and of larger life to the soul of the man who looked upon and loved her?

So, too, God speaks in the holy influences of the sanctuary when we come not to be seen or to see, or to make ourselves in any way conspicuous, but to listen in quietness for His voice.

HOW TO BE RICH

As we walk by the wayside of our daily calling and do the drudgery of even uncongenial tasks, He speaks to us through our work if we do it well.

Thus it is in a multitude of ways that God speaks to us through the channels of our experience and from every angle of our many-sided being. Along all these lines of the development of our God-given nature—the physical, intellectual, social, esthetic, and spiritual—we ought to so cultivate ourselves as to enjoy these communings with the Divine.

God often speaks strongly to us from His Word, and through the great and striking experiences of life; yet not always along the highways of spiritual life alone, but in the byways of our being does the Lord of life appear, to bring His messages of inspiration. It is in the unexpected wayside experiences that we often enjoy our most precious spiritual feasts. These are the voices of God causing our souls to burn and flame within us as thus unperceived He talks with us by the way. Some never hear

THE MASTER SPIRIT

these voices at all. They can hear God only in the thunder and the earthquake, and yet have the strange hallucination that they are the only people who ever do hear Him. While the thunder rolls and crashes through the spiritual heavens, they are far up among the Delectable Mountains, but in the routine of everyday life they are apt to fail because they are not able to hear the voice of God softly whispering in the silences, and in the rustle of the leaves in the evening wind. They are like those men who served in artillery regiments in time of war, and have listened so long to the roar of the cannon that they have become deaf to other sounds. Even in the services of God's house, if the tremors of the earthquake and the splitting of timbers is not heard, they go away and lament that God was not there; when, perhaps, the very air was vibrant with the divine presence which their tumultuous natures had not the refinement and delicacy of spiritual touch to perceive.

No wonder if such people seem to excel in spiritual wisdom and holiness during the re-

HOW TO BE RICH

vival season, and then grovel in sin, doing the dirty work of the devil during the dull season of the summer months. Such folks need the sincere pity and sympathy of the truly spiritual-minded.

That kind of church life which tends to develop this type of character is seriously lacking in the qualification for Christian leadership. Only now and then does God speak to us in startling fashion, but He is constantly walking with us in the humble and unsuspected places, if we but have our finer sensibilities atuned to His touch.

Education—the drawing out and cultivation of every faculty and power of our being—is just this atuning of the soul to a larger capacity for divine fellowship. And he who neglects any possible enlargement of his life in any of these directions is to that extent blocking the avenues of divine approach to his soul. He is making impossible the wayside talks with Jesus along that particular road.

Let us make it our practice to take evening

THE MASTER SPIRIT

walks along all those highways and byways frequented by the Master, so that we may the more often catch the thrill of His presence, and rejoice in the rich revelations of His love.

We crave these experiences. Coming in one night from his work, a father heard his little boy, three or four years of age, crying upstairs. He wondered what the little fellow could be crying for, as he had been given a good supper and was comfortably tucked into his warm bed with the light still burning. Bidding him to go to sleep the father sat down to read. As the little one still continued to cry, he laid down his book and went up. He asked him what was wrong, and if he wanted anything. The reply was, as a pair of little arms crept about his neck, "I just wanted you, papa."

So in our loneliness of soul we often cry, "O Father, it is Thee, only Thee, and Thy companionship that we want." We should ever remember that Jesus is walking with us. We only need the enlarged vision, the enrichment of being which will enable us to discover Him as

HOW TO BE RICH

He walks by our side. Let us not say of any time or place, "God was not there;" but let us rather say in all truthfulness, "I have been so lacking in spiritual capacity that I was there, and Jesus was there, and I knew it not."

There were doubtless other people on the road to Emmaus, but only those two disciples discovered the Master there.

And shall fellowship with God not mean the largest possible things for us, as well as a most delightful fellowship? That it should not prove to be so is unthinkable. Familiar perhaps, but none the less suggestive, is this incident of one of the world's great musicians: He entered one day a room in London where a group of fashionable people were gathered at an auction. Among other things, an old, greasy, rather disreputable looking violin was offered for sale. Nobody seemed to want it, and the auctioneer was about to give up his efforts, when the musician entered. As he saw what was being offered for sale he pushed his way through the crowd and reached for the instrument. He

THE MASTER SPIRIT

had recognized its worth, and with fondness and affection he handled it as if it were his own little child. He put it to his ear and listened, and then, reaching for the bow, began to play. As he played the noise was stilled, everybody listened, tears began to trickle down their cheeks, and as he closed he was greeted with thunders of applause. Some one whispered, "Paganini," and so it was—the great master of the violin.

Others had that day handled that instrument, but only he could bring out its greatness. So with my life. Only the Master who gave it being, and who knows every string, and the music of which it is capable, can bring out all its glorious melodies. Why shall I not give it to Him and allow Him to have the right of way with it? Rich, indeed, is the soul that can have these communings with the Master Spirit.

“ Speak to Him, thou, for He hears,
And spirit with spirit can meet,
Closer is He than breathing,
And nearer than hands and feet.”

HOW TO BE RICH

Blessed is that life that is lived in such nearness to Him that the soul can say:

“ He speaks to me in every wind,
He smiles from every star ;
He is not deaf to me, nor blind,
Nor absent, nor afar.

“ His hand that shuts the flowers to sleep,
Each in its dewy fold,
Is strong my feeble life to keep,
And competent to hold.

“ I can not walk in darkness long,
My light is by my side ;
I can not stumble or go wrong
While following such a guide.

“ He is my stay and my defense ;
How shall I fail or fall ?
My helper is Omnipotence,
My ruler ruleth all.”

VI. The Element of Personality

“ Man, as a finite creator, images the Infinite One ; he has, in his poor degree, the same reason, imagination, perception of beauty and fitness, and the same power of choice.”—*Parker*.

“ I should have done no good, if I had been under the necessity of conforming to the notions of another person.”
—*Napoleon*.

“ O, if it gush not from thine inmost soul,
Thou hast not won the life-restoring draught.”
—*Goethe*.

“ It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishment the scroll ;
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.”
—*W. E. Henley*.

“ And being let go, they went to their own company.”
—*Acts*.

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

WHAT we get out of life depends not on our surroundings, but on our personality. To have the sources of life's true and real wealth pointed out to us does not make us rich, any more than we gain a fortune by riding through the country in a railway car and having a friend point out to us the location of its gold and silver mines. No matter how rich the feast spread before us, if we partake not of it, the vital forces of our being are no more benefited by those things than if they had never been. We must acquire for ourselves the things that are worth while, before we can be enriched thereby. The fact of their existence, and their possession by others does not make them ours. It depends upon our own choice and our own effort whether we obtain them or not.

There are those who would have us believe

HOW TO BE RICH

that there are other influences; such as heredity and environment, which decide for us what life shall mean, but not so. It is true that these things do have their influence, but such influences are not the dominant and deciding factors in the scale of being. After all has been said that can be said for these things, still we are like the water-lilies growing in the Concord River, which Hawthorne so beautifully describes in one of his sketches: "The yellow lily spreads its broad, flat leaves on the margins, and the fragrant, white pond-lily just so far from the river's brink that you can not grasp it save at the hazard of plunging in. It is a marvel whence this perfect flower derives its loveliness and perfume, springing as it does from the black mud over which the river sleeps, and where lurk the slimy eel and the speckled frog and the mud-turtle, whom continual washings can not cleanse. It is the very same black mud out of which the yellow lily sucks its obscene life and noisome odor. Thus we see, too, in the world, that some persons as-

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

simulate only what is ugly and evil from the same moral circumstances that supply good and beautiful results—the fragrance of celestial flowers—to the daily life of others.”

Some time ago on a delightful summer morning I had the pleasure of strolling along the lane leading down past the “Old Manse,” where those sketches were written, to the river and the bridge, where that opening conflict of the Revolution was fought, and where sleep the first British soldiers who fell in that struggle. A short distance above the bridge I discovered some of those lilies, and after an interesting experience in which I barely escaped a plunge in the river I obtained one of them—one of the purest and loveliest things that grow, and doubly prized because of its associations both historic and literary. I thought how perfectly that plant had taken into its being just those elements from which it could extract beauty and perfume, rejecting all others.

So there are in nature everywhere organisms which bring out the precious things that are

HOW TO BE RICH

worth while from the same environment out of which others suck poison. I go into my garden and find the onion and the rose growing side by side. In the pasture one animal produces bristles and another wool. In the branches of the mulberry the cankerworm ruins that which another turns into silk. The muck of the swamp produces either the sickening odor of the skunk cabbage, or the soothing fragrance of the violet. The soil of the thicket yields the poison hemlock and the delicious syrup of the raspberry. Because of these facts I see it is not so much my problem, as it is what I bring to that problem that counts.

Two men in precisely the same environment will produce results in their lives which are direct opposites of each other. A minister one day tried to induce two young coal miners to live better lives. They said they would do so were it not for the fact that it was their work to drive mules in the mine, and no man could drive a mule in a coal mine and live a Christian life at the same time. The minister told them that

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

he had a better reason himself than that for not living a right life, for he dealt with people who were often worse than mules to manage, although supposed to be vastly superior.

The fact is, we all live under difficult conditions which tax our powers to the utmost. The fact that we live in hard places is no excuse whatever for our failure to make the best out of life. We expect that of each other. How others criticise us if we do not do well; and how hard we are on them if they do not measure up to our highest thought for themselves. If such a life is impossible in a hard place, why do we punish the criminal? The fact that we do so, however degrading may have been his environment, shows our real position on this point—that we are conscious of the fact that the crucial point is in man himself, and not in his surroundings. God expects good of us under all conditions. The Bible, the keenest and most perfect delineator of human character the literature of the world has ever known, is insistent in its requirements on this point.

HOW TO BE RICH

Our own conscience, moreover, approves as right both the demand of men and of God that we make good, and not evil, out of our opportunity in life. Experience, moreover, reinforces our convictions in this matter, with positive proof that such lives have been and can be lived; that the human lily can, like its fellow of the vegetable world, produce out of the blackness and the slime the whiteness and fragrance of a pure life.

A study of the character of Joseph and many of the other characters of Scripture are convincing on this point. We are told that there were saints even in Cæsar's household—that den of all infamy.

Read the story of Jerry McAuley, born and reared to a life of crime, his environment the worst conceivable, and yet through the coming of a new impulse into his soul living ever afterward a stainless life in the midst of the worst conditions the world knows anything of to-day. No careful student of human life can question our conclusion on this point.

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

Character is the mold into which things are run, and not things the mold into which character is run. What though the very laws of nature seem to be against you? Learn how to use them and they will aid your cause.

Ignoring the law of gravitation and trying to act independently of it, a crazy man may walk out of a twentieth story window and have his life crushed out, and every bone in his body broken as he is dashed to the pavement below. By recognizing this law and carefully directing our actions with reference to it, we may so conduct ourselves as to avoid ever having a serious fall even on an icy pavement. By so doing we submit to be controlled by this important law which may seem at times to be working against us.

There is still another possible relation which we may sustain to this law. The eagle understands it better than we, and so adjusts himself to it that he rises into the pure air and eternal sunshine beyond the highest mountain peaks, far above the clouds and storms that rage be-

HOW TO BE RICH

neath. Man, who has long sought to do the same, when he can use this law as does the eagle, will have achieved the mastery of the air, not independently of law, but because of it. Did the bird break the law he would fall; did he merely submit to it he could no more fly than we have been able to do in the past; but because he understands how to use it, it becomes a power not to bind him down, but to lift him up and give him the thrill of liberty and of mastery.

In violation of law the child puts his hand into the fire and is burned. Then for a time he submits to the law of which he has so painfully become conscious, and avoids the fire. Man in the primitive ages betook himself to the warm parts of the earth, and later, even in the time of Rome's power, went to bed at dark to avoid the necessity of using fire for light. To-day he uses this power, converts it into another form of force and sets it to doing all sorts of drudgery for him—lifting weights he could not budge himself; running his machinery; making for him the necessaries, comforts, and luxuries of life;

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

and carrying him across continents and oceans at a rate he never dreamed of a hundred years ago.

Franklin was likely to lose his life by sending his kite up into a thundercloud and drawing down the lightnings to himself. But he had a great idea back of his experiment. Through the ages man had been submitting to and standing in awe of this strange power; but to-day we do not seek merely to escape its perils; we catch it to light our homes and streets, ring our door bells, run our cars, and carry our messages as on the wings of light to the ends of the earth.

In the wonderful achievements of our present-day civilization God is giving us just a little insight into the glorious liberty of His children—a liberty which comes not from rebellion or mere submission, but from *doing* in obedience to His laws. Liberty through law is written deep in the very structure of all created things. Only that one who has so mastered the intellectual life that its laws are to him easy stepping stones to the truth, and thus a source of power to lift

HOW TO BE RICH

him above his fellows, knows what intellectual freedom means.

So likewise it is in the moral and the spiritual. God's laws and the truths of His kingdom are not burdens, but sources of power to those who accept them and have the sense and grace to use them aright. The commands of God are not chains to bind, but the wooings of Infinite Love luring us to the heights. It does not mean bondage to be a child of God. Our Father gives us His laws not to enforce His authority, but because in His infinite wisdom He knows the way by which alone we can rise to power, and in His measureless love He discloses to us the secret.

The devil is keeping many of us in bondage to-day by means of that old threadbare lie that the Lord is trying to lay a burden upon us. He is, on the contrary, endeavoring to lift us to freedom by making us masters of truth and law instead of their slaves.

Why is it that when we can enjoy the glory and liberty of children of God we still persist

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

in digging in the mire, with our minds and hearts open toward the earth instead of toward heaven? Why should I be ruled by those things which are against conscience and reason and my own best judgment? The power is in my hands to do what I will, if I choose to use it. As some one has said, "The world is waiting to see what God may not make out of that life that is wholly given to Him."

A writer in one of our most thoughtful magazines said recently: "The heresy of an irresponsible despotism over man's moral choices must not, shall not, be permitted to blind us to our responsibility for our destiny. This glorious but awful responsibility—to forget which all sorts of opiates have been invented, all delusions devised—is well set forth in a rare bit of verse quoted to young men for the formation of character:

" ' One ship drives east and another drives west
With the selfsame winds that blow ;
'T is the set of the sails, and not the gales,
That settles the way they go.

HOW TO BE RICH

“ ‘ Like the winds of the sea are the ways of fate,
As we voyage along through life ;
'T is the set of the soul that decides the goal,
And not the calm or the strife. ’ ”

All power is not in our hands, but the rudder which will direct our vessel into the currents of power is in our control. We can direct our little craft into either the equatorial or polar currents as we will.

That young man or woman who is vile and goes to the depths, has deliberately chosen to be vile. As in every nation, so in every soul “God has not left Himself without witness.” The great scales of the United States mint are so accurately adjusted that a hair or a pencil mark on a sheet of white paper will tilt the balance. So in the scales of life the human will, the free choice of the soul, determines the result.

Not only should this regal, Godlike quality of the soul be recognized and our life adjusted in harmony therewith, but we should honor the peculiar quality of our own being—our personal equation as it were. Paul said to the Corinthians, “Now hath God set the members

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him.” This is the statement of a physical fact to illustrate a spiritual truth. The eye is a very much specialized organ, adapted in a wonderful manner to one particular use, and to that only. So is the ear, and the hand, and the foot, and every other part of the human mechanism.

Each one has its own special work to do, yet in the very doing of that work in its own way it adds to the efficiency of every other; and the body can not do its full work without every one of them. This fact sets forth beautifully a corresponding truth in the intellectual, social, and spiritual realms. God has set us in the world, in the Church, in society, “as it hath pleased Him”—and it hath pleased Him to make us all to differ one from another.

The editor of a certain religious paper said not long ago that the preacher who would appear in the pulpit in a shirtwaist would be a suitable candidate for the lunatic asylum.

We do not repeat the statement for the sake of either advocating or condemning the par-

HOW TO BE RICH

ticular thing here referred to, but to say this: One of the most senseless things the world ever saw is the thing known as fashion, when slavishly followed,—the trifling, absurd, woeful species of insanity that stands aghast if every man's coat is not cut after the same pattern, and every woman's hat is not adjusted at precisely the same angle. Personal taste and comfort should rule in such matters, and people be allowed some individuality without having to run the risk of being called crazy.

May the time be not distant when the world will have too much sense and independence to be made uncomfortable and ugly because Dame Fashion says so. God hasten the day when the old lady in her dotage will have to go out of business. The same curse rests to some extent upon the educational world,—the tendency to run all minds into the same channel.

So much science, so much mathematics, so much dead languages must be ground out by every student if he would hope to graduate. A few years ago a young man in one of our best

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

schools dared to assert his individuality in these matters, and accordingly spent a large part of his time in the library studying those things which suited the bent of his mind—at the expense, sometimes, of the disagreeable things in his course. As a result, when one of his professors was asked what kind of a student he was, the reply was, “Poor, poor, very poor.” Yet that young man has now stood for years at the head of one of the great educational institutions of the country, and is recognized as one of the greatest platform orators of the world to-day.

The most monotonous thing in the world would be the accomplishment of just what society wants and is struggling for—the slavish following of custom in dress, and habits of thought and expression. As the Sage of Concord well says: “Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members.” “Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life’s culti-

HOW TO BE RICH

vation; but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous half possession."

Let us not be afraid of originality; of assuming our own God-given niche in the world's plan. A carload of sewer-pipe may be run in the same mold, but a carload of men ought not so to be. One of the most abominable sights our civilization affords is a row of company houses—all built on the same plan, painted with the same kind of paint, and filthy with the same kind of dirt.

Instead of being a thing to be gotten rid of, our individuality, if handled properly, is one of the most valuable assets of our being. We find no mechanical reproduction of any type in nature. The leaves, the blades of grass, even "two peas in a pod," differ; and so with our larger life. There are no "all round men" as there are no all around members of the body,—those that can do the work of all. There are, it is true, those who can come nearer doing this than others, yet even those persons make a

THE ELEMENT OF PERSONALITY

failure of life just in proportion as they get away from the work which they can do best.

Let us then have the faith and courage to believe in ourselves; to believe in our opportunity, however small it may seem; and to believe that God has given us a chance which we may use as nobly and as successfully as any other man or woman who ever lived.

As the air and the sunshine belong to all, so nature, friends, books, and the Spirit of God, the primary sources of life's real and abiding wealth, are within the reach of all, to pour their riches into our bosom if we will it so. Let us never forget that our own personality is the factor of supreme importance in determining what we shall make out of life.

VII. Life's Decisions

“ There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune.”
—*Shakespeare*.

“ Where shall I grasp thee, infinite nature, where ?”
—*Goethe*.

“ Except a man be born again, he can not see the Kingdom
of God.”—*Jesus*.

“ In full and glad surrender we give ourselves to Thee,
Thine utterly and only and evermore to be.
O Son of God, who lovest us, we will be Thine alone,
And all we are and all we have shall henceforth be Thine
own.”
—*Havergal*.

LIFE'S DECISIONS

SINCE we are to determine for ourselves what use we make of life's treasures, and whether we shall be enriched thereby or not, it is important that we take our bearings to discover where we are at.

We all at some time come to have a Garden of Eden experience. The Bible account of the fall is repeated in the life of every man and woman. We need not hunt elsewhere for proofs of the truth of that part of the Bible records,—we have it written deep in our own life story. The time came in our development as in the experience of our first parents, when we became conscious that there was a right and a wrong way. There came a tempter who said, It does not matter if you do violate your own best judgment and the voice of God in small things; you

HOW TO BE RICH

will even be wiser and have more knowledge and experience by so doing.

Restraint seems unreasonable. The evil thing seems desirable for our physical nature; a pleasure to the eyes; desirable to make one wise—the sowing of wild oats is a valuable experience. How would it have been possible to more accurately transcribe our own experiences? Yet how forcibly a little later are we convinced that the whole argument is a lie.

We learn from sad experience that physical indulgence brings weakness, disease, and death; the seemingly attractive things are sometimes serpents in disguise; and the wisdom acquired is much better learned, if it must be known, through somebody else's mistakes rather than our own.

In my boyhood I was one day doing some work in assisting my father about the yard. While helping him carry something across the grass I saw what seemed to me to be an unusually large and beautiful butterfly. As soon as I could put down my load I ran back to examine

LIFE'S DECISIONS

it, when to my surprise and horror I found it to be a loathesome serpent, coiled ready to strike. So is sin always. When we yield to it and become conscious of our guilt, we try to cover it up—to hide from God, and from men as well. Failing in this as we always do, we try to put the blame on others, only to have the conviction fastened upon us sooner or later that we ourselves must bear the blame and the punishment.

We all become conscious that we have been swerved aside from the pursuit of the best; and are made to realize that to obtain the true riches, decisions must be made, changes must come in our life's plan, a turning about on many points, a new direction given to the currents of our being.

These turning points are the crucial moments in life—the strategic times when our personality asserts itself against those influences both from without and from within which would hinder in us the development of the best. Some who have posed as great teachers would have us think that the religion of the future will not

HOW TO BE RICH

believe in clearly defined and rapid transformations of character. In other words, we must give up the old ideas of conversion.

We need have no fear that truth will be overthrown by so-called scientists and philosophers, who in their conclusions ignore the facts of common experience. Theory, even with a supposedly great name back of it, counts for nothing against the actual facts of life. One Paul or one Jerry McAuley does more than all the volumes that might be written to turn into the wastebasket the product of those "advanced thinkers," who have nothing but their own blatant conceit with which to convince the world that they are advanced.

The Salvation Army is instrumental in lifting many a life from the blackness and the slime to where its garments shine in all the whiteness of a transfigured life. And three-fourths of all their converts hold true to the faith.

A recent review has this to say of the work of William Duncan, the Apostle of Alaska: "Here was a man who without special training,

LIFE'S DECISIONS

except such as he had in the school of God Himself, brought to the degraded Indian tribes the good news of deliverance from sin. His hearers were for the most part splendid animals in whom passion had been let loose through association with abandoned whites, and whose natures had been spoiled and corrupted by drink and lust. And yet in less than a year he had the great body of them directed to better ways of thinking, and in less than five years he had a Christian village and a community of disciples whose morality and integrity were the wonder and admiration of British officialdom."

Another, speaking of the work of rescue in the slums of English cities, says: "No one whose heart is not dead to the work of saving men can read these glimpses of British mission halls and their rescue work without being so stirred that his heart will burn and exult within him over the saving miracles wrought by power divine among lost and ruined men and women. The evidences of Christianity which blaze and thunder in the mission halls outargue Butler's

HOW TO BE RICH

Analogy and all other printed reasonings. And all the ignoramuses, learned and unlearned, who announce the passing of orthodox evangelical Christianity, and who imagine that the gospel is not the power of God unto salvation, are talking out of a vacuum and parading their ignorance of what is going on in the actual world to-day."

A multitude of people in the world know for themselves that in them "Old things have passed away and all things have become new." It takes no proof to convince them of the possibility of these things; they have experienced them, and have thus the most indisputable evidence, not from hearsay, but from personal knowledge. The fact that some learned jack-anape may have had no such experience is nothing against the fact, but only another point against himself.

The fact of sudden changes and decisions is a matter of everyday occurrence with us all. A man fails in business; all the accumulations of a lifetime are swept away as in a moment; he sets

LIFE'S DECISIONS

out for the river to end all by a plunge in its dark waters. He meets a friend who has all faith in his honesty and integrity, and in his ability to retrieve all he has lost, and more. That friend so inspires him with faith and courage that he turns directly about, returns to his family, re-enters the work of life, and makes a more brilliant success than he had ever dreamed possible. Another sets out on a journey, and in the course of time comes to a cross-roads, where two roads lead away at right angles from the one on which he has been traveling. One of these leads to his destination, and the other far away from that point. He discovers after an hour's ride that he is on the wrong road. What shall he do but turn right about face at once and go in the opposite direction? It may take him some time to get thoroughly righted, but the fact of a sudden turning in order to get right is an actual fact of his experience.

All roads do not lead right in the world of intellect and spirit any more than in common country mud, and what is more reasonable

HOW TO BE RICH

and in harmony with human nature than that the soul, powerfully convinced of its error, shall turn squarely about and enter that way which has been shown to be right?

God's power can right a man or woman who has gone wrong, if that personality created in His image with its own powers of choice will consent to accept the proffered help. If we be willing to put ourselves in the currents of spiritual power they will assuredly sweep us on to the best things the universe of God possesses for a soul.

Conscious of having gone wrong, the appropriate prayer of every soul is that of the psalmist, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." The most important epoch in the life of a soul is when it halts in its wanderings and fully resolves to climb upward.

Religion is both a science and an art. Science is knowledge. Art is the production of something. Religion is the science of knowing God and His will, and the art of char-

LIFE'S DECISIONS

acter production as a result of that knowledge. We all know that somehow human life has failed—it has lost its way.

My supreme business being to make the most of myself, how can I do it? To make the most of only a part of our being means a deformed and narrow life. To make the most possible of ourselves is the ideal. Yet we are conscious that this is just what we have not done. Religion tells us that the only way is to get right with God. It is through lack of moral response to the best that is in us that our sense of failure comes. The perfect response of our moral nature to the moral nature of God Himself is the ideal condition, and conversion is the process by which we attain it. It is in what we are—in the personality, the foundation substance which lies back of all outward activities—that the change described by that word must be wrought. To be converted means to have the bad, both in thought and action, replaced by the good. There is very little of real moral reconstruction involved in

HOW TO BE RICH

religion as understood and practiced by many so-called religious people to-day.

Conversion is a change of mind, but more than that it is a change of character. It is a reconstruction of our moral being.

How does this great transformation come about?

Man's affiliation of himself with God brings about a real reproduction of the divine character within. Jesus was conscious that at every moment God's thought, God's will, God's actual life were being reproduced in Him. The Fatherhood of God so far as we are concerned must be taken to mean the same thing to the extent of our capacity. God wants thus to be a Father to us. He is ready and yearning to make my life a copy, a reproduction of His own. But He can be and do that only as I permit Him. God loves me, and love is an active effort on the part of Him who loves to unite with Himself the object on which His love is set.

In view of this love, genuine repentance must be an adequate recognition of the fact that the

LIFE'S DECISIONS

life not given to God has been an injury to him. The truly repentant spirit thinks far more of what it has done to God—its best friend—than of what God may do to it by way of punishment.

Repentance is the beginning of life's spiritual enrichment. Christ is the life giver. He came not only to be a revealer of the divine, but to communicate the divine. He not only shows what God is, but imparts God to man. Receiving Christ we receive life, and receiving life we receive all.

The effort to realize in our experience the life of God resolves itself into the making of our inward life touch upon and be inspired by the inner life of Jesus. The disciple is brought to God by abandoning himself to the Christ. We may do and be some worthy things apart from Christ, but of the life of God apart from Him we can not partake. Through Him the life of the Father has come to men. Life gripping life transforms into its own likeness the life that allows itself to be gripped. The

HOW TO BE RICH

person of commanding influence molds. This will mean in our relation to God a real sorrow for the past, and a desire for a better and more perfect life; a coming to Christ as the life giver through whose power the divine life in us must be realized; the submitting of the entire personality to the personality of Christ as the poorer to the richer for what that richer has to give. When the soul thus turns to God His mighty personality comes into and floods the entire being with His fellowship and His love, so that the soul rejoices in a new-found life which is "Joy unspeakable and full of glory."

We become new beings when without reservation we yield intellect, affections, and will, not to the high, but to the Highest; when we allow God to come into the quietude of mind and heart and reveal Himself as He is. The human heart is not simply to make room for God among the other things it holds dear, but to clear them out altogether, and let them come in again only as He wills it so.

This does not mean that the other things in

LIFE'S DECISIONS

life that are really worth while shall be given up, but rather that they shall be the more forcefully pursued. It gives life the only sure and safe anchorage. Having found itself and sure of its position, the soul for the first time, and in the only possible way, becomes capable of the very best things.

Youth is the logical period for entering God's service. Careful thinkers have recently made an extensive study of the subject of conversion for the purpose of finding out the age at which people are most likely to turn to God. They find that the greatest number are converted between the ages of thirteen and seventeen. Four-fifths of all who ever come to Christ come between the ages of eleven and twenty. Not one in a hundred is converted after the age of thirty.

This is no denial of the power of God to save at any age, but is simply a statement of fact that not one in a hundred actually does return to Him after that age. This simple fact is worth more than all the theories in the world

HOW TO BE RICH

in deciding this great question, and it shows conclusively not only the importance, but the necessity of early religion. This is true because youth is the time when habits are being formed, tastes developed, and the other great choices of life decided upon. It is the time when we naturally decide what we are to do in life, and who are to be our life companions in the doing of that work. So it is the time of all others in which to make this greatest of all choices—that between a life of active virtue and godliness, and a life of indifference which will most certainly end in sin and hopelessness.

The greatness and glory of our lives will depend upon our responsiveness to the touch of the fingers of God as they are impressed in so many ways on the marvelous instrument of the soul.

Set Paderewski down to a block of wood, and no matter how skillful and perfect might be his touch, no music would come; but let him sit down to a piano, every key of which responds perfectly to the mood of his soul as expressed by

LIFE'S DECISIONS

that master touch, and what wonderful melody will be the result.

Too many of us are missing the true wealth and blessing of existence by our failure to open our nature to the touch of God, and to the riches that are within our grasp.

A playmate of my boyhood days lives to-day on the same farm and in the same house where he was born. That of itself is nothing unusual or remarkable. But this house was built of logs in pioneer days, and afterwards weatherboarded, and is so out of repair that it almost floods out the family when it rains. The boards are warped and twisted so that they point in every conceivable direction.

Yet on that farm, to be had for the effort required to go after them, are the finest building stone and the best of hardwood timber—oak, maple, birch, cherry, and walnut—and many times as much extra as would pay for the work of construction, if he were not able to pay for it otherwise.

Why live in a hovel when a palace is within

HOW TO BE RICH

reach? Why, above all, should any of us follow such an example when it comes to the things of the higher life?

The tragic thing about life is that so many young men and women with the best within reach never lay hold upon it, and thus miss life's treasures.

“ Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine,
Accept my will this day, for Jesus' sake ;
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine—
Nor any world-proud sacrifice to make ;
But here I bring within my trembling hand,
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small,
And Thou alone, O God, canst understand
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield my all.
Hidden therein, Thy searching gaze can see
Struggles of passion—visions of delight—
All that I love, and am, and fain would be,
Deep loves, fond hopes, and longings infinite.
It hath been wet with tears and dimmed with sighs,
Clinched in my grasp, till beauty hath it none—
Now, from the footstool where it vanquished lies,
The prayer ascendeth, ‘ May Thy will be done.’
Take it, O Father, ere my courage fail,
And merge it so in Thine own will, that e’en
If in some desperate hour my cries prevail,
And Thou give back my will it may have been
So changed, so purified, so fair have grown,
So one with Thee, so filled with peace divine,
I may not see or know it as my own,
But, gaining back my will, may find it Thine.”

VIII. Some Acquired Essentials of Success

“ God has His best things for the few
Who dare to stand the test ;
He has His second choice for those
Who will not have His best.”

“ This above all : to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”
—*Shakespeare.*

“ Not in the clamor of the crowded street,
Not in the shouts and plaudits of the throng,
But in ourselves are triumph and defeat.”
—*Longfellow.*

“ Diving and finding no pearls in the sea,
Blame not the ocean, the fault is in thee.”
—*From the Persian.*

SOME ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

NOTWITHSTANDING the treasures about us and the power God has delegated to us of deciding for ourselves the aim of life, we shall not make the best of even a good life without certain things that can be acquired only through the stress and struggle of actual living.

The permanent riches from our environment can be had only through effort, even as the cheaper things of a perishable nature can be ours only as we labor for them.

Familiar it may be, but true to our deepest life is the story of Theseus, a youth of the olden time. On the summit of a hill was a great stone, underneath which were treasures, including the equipments of the young hero, and of supreme importance to him. These he was to have only when he could by his own might turn over the stone and take them.

HOW TO BE RICH

After he had reached a certain age his mother took him up on the hill to try the stone. He could not move it. The next year he went through a course of physical training and tried again, but with the same result. And so year after year he kept up the training and the trying, until at last he was able to overturn the stone and grasp joyously the weapons for his life's work. It is the part of divine wisdom that it should be so. Theseus would not have been able to handle his weapons had he not first developed power sufficient to overturn the rock.

So we, if we could get those things that are necessary to success without having put forth our best efforts for their acquirement, would find them too ponderous for our strength. We would be like David, crushed down under the weight of Saul's armor, unable to use it.

Every normal, healthy child has splendid visions and dreams of the future. One day a father presented his little son with a book in which was recorded the life story of a great man, who had received the highest honors his

ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

own land could bestow upon him; and then going abroad, had been honored and feted the whole world around, until, grown weary of it all, he stood one day upon the deck of a large ocean steamer as she plowed the waters of the great deep. As he stood upon the deck gazing eastward, the signs of land appeared, and soon the vessel sighted a harbor entrance. He knew that it was the object of his longing. He knew that beyond, spread out in beauty, were the mountains and plains, the hills and valleys of his own beloved America, for from the vessels in that harbor floated that emblem of liberty, his country's flag. He knew it was the Golden Gate—the entrance to the harbor of San Francisco. And as the vessel neared the harbor he felt a thrill of delight and joy as he thought of the loved ones he was soon to meet, and of the rich prospect which awaited him when he had reached that smiling land beyond the Golden Gate which he was rapidly nearing.

Now there is a period in the life of each one of us which may fittingly be compared to

HOW TO BE RICH

this incident in the life of the traveler, but with one great difference. The traveler looks forward with joy to the Golden Gate only after he has become weary of travel; while the point to which we look forward is one which occupies our eager attention from very infancy. It is what we might call the transition period from preparation to life's great work. Where is the boy who does not look forward with eager impatience to the time when he will be a man; when he will be free to do as he pleases, and win for himself honor, wealth, and fame? O, how our hearts and brains have thrilled in anticipation of the great and glorious things which we could, in imagination, see awaiting us beyond the portals of that magic gateway!

But as those who are advanced in life, and even those of us who have scarcely yet entered upon that great field of fortune which lies beyond that golden gate, as we look back over life what do we see? Probably to some of us it may have been otherwise, but to many it has been and is to-day bright. Yet we can see away

ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

back that which now seems to us like an oasis in a desert. We remember those happy days of childhood, when not a cloud nor even the suspicion of a care darkened our sky. We can feel that that beautiful poem of Willis's was indeed a true picture of ourselves:

“ Who could paint
The young and shadowless spirit?
Who could chain
The sparkling gladness of that heart that lived
Like a glad fountain in the eye of light,
With an unbreathing pencil? Nature's gift
Has nothing that is like it. Sun and stream,
And the new leaves of June, and the young lark
That flees away into the depths of heaven
Lost in his own wild music, and the breath
Of springtime, and the summer eve, and noon
In the cool autumn are like fingers swept
Over sweet-toned affections, but the joy
That enters into the spirit of a child
Is deep as his young heart; his very breath,
The simple sense of being is enough
To ravish him, and like a thrilling touch
He feels each moment of his life go by.”

But how many of us realized the joys of childhood and its freedom until they were gone? Possibly none of us. We were all looking forward to something still brighter ahead of us.

HOW TO BE RICH

Yet all too soon that bright vision vanished,
and we could add with the poet:

“ Beautiful, beautiful childhood ; delicate bud
Of the immortal flower that will unfold
And come to its maturity in heaven—
I weep your earthly glory. ’T is a light
Sent to the new-born spirit that goes out
With the first idle wind. It is the leaf
Freshly flung upon the river that will dance
Upon the wave that stealeth out its light,
Then sink of its own heaviness. The face
Of the delightful earth will to your eye
Grow dim ; the fragrance of the many flowers
Be noticed not, and the beguiling voice
Of nature in her gentleness will be
To manhood’s senseless ear inaudible.”

Yet why should it be so? Why should the
delightful prospects, the high hopes of child-
hood be blighted? Why should the fair land
beyond this golden gate be turned into a desert
almost as soon as we have set foot upon it? It
should not be so.. Yet in most cases and to
most of us this is the result.

Many a young life, which has started out
with as bright prospects as any of us, has re-
sulted in a miserable failure. And why? Was
it because “Mountains of darkness rose before

ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

the soul the pathway to whose sunlit summits was impassable?" Ah, no. But in nine cases out of ten, where failure has resulted, it has been because those who made the failure have started out without preparation, or without sufficient preparation, or the right kind of preparation for the work which was before them. It is true we will all meet difficulties and have obstacles to overcome, which we see not now and which we will not always be able to anticipate; yet if we start right it is possible for us to make this entrance from the period of preparation to active life—from boyhood and girlhood to manhood and womanhood—such that it will be truly a golden gate to each and every one of us.

This preparation must be of a threefold nature if, in mature life, we would be ready to dig the most out of earth's richest mines. The man who digs in any mine must have some sort of an equipment to begin with. Life's best equipment consists in a healthy body, an educated mind, and a clean heart.

A strong body full of life and energy is es-

HOW TO BE RICH

essential to the best work. Life is like an observatory with a basement, consisting of a substantial foundation, heating and power plant; a ground floor with windows, giving an outlook to all points of the compass; and a dome, open not only in all directions to the earth, but giving a limitless sweep of the heavens as well. The foundation and basement equipment must be of the best, or the work will be uncertain and in the end unsatisfactory.

We should each have the best possible body. No boy or girl can afford to form any bad habits. A few years ago a young man started out in life very successfully, and soon acquired a fine fortune. He said to his pastor one day: "I have all any man needs. I will let the other fellow have a chance now, while I enjoy what I have earned." He was even then on the point of collapse, and in less than a year was lying under the sod. He had learned as a boy an evil habit, which had grown upon him, as such things always do, until the strength of his life had been eaten out, and his vital forces gave way when

ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

they ought to have been in the vigor of their prime.

There comes to mind a minister of the gospel—a man of might and power, who was a leader of the work of his denomination, but who, by bad habits in youth, had so wrecked his physical life that for him the joys of living were sadly curtailed, and his own usefulness in his profession largely hindered.

Many there are who by mistreating their physical being, and taking into it things that God never intended should be so used, are destroying it, and wrecking its powers to that extent that what God gave as a basis for higher life, is a hindrance and a curse to that life instead. A good body gives its possessor a decided advantage in life from every point of view.

A trained mind is an element of untold value in making the most of life. A prominent college president recently took the trouble to examine carefully "Who's Who in America" for the purpose of discovering the relative value

HOW TO BE RICH

of a trained mind in the work of life. He found that of those prominent enough to be mentioned in that work more than seventy per cent had received a college education, while but nine per cent had stopped with less than a high school course. He found further that the college graduates form only one in three hundred of the population, and in proportion to their numbers should have furnished but one-third of one per cent of these successful men and women, instead of seventy per cent. The uneducated part of the population, instead of furnishing two hundred and ninety-nine out of every three hundred of the successful ones as their numbers would have entitled them to do, furnished less than a third of that number.

That is, the chances of success are multiplied more than two hundred times by having a college training. However, we would enter a strong protest against the merely commercial aspect of education. It is valuable from this point of view, but this is not its highest value. The old idea that the girl does not need this kind

ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

of training because she is to be a homekeeper, and that the boy does not need it unless he is to be a minister, doctor, or lawyer, has gone forever out of date.

The great object of education is not primarily to make money, but to help one in living the richest possible life. It is therefore just as valuable to the hod-carrier or the street-sweeper as to anybody else. So, too, the girls, who are to train and most largely mold in the homes the men and the women of the future, are as much in need of the best mental culture and training as those who preach the sermons, write the books, and make the laws of the world.

Not money or fame, but an enlargement of soul for all time and eternity, is the first reason for mental culture as it is for spiritual culture. Who then can afford to neglect it or treat it lightly?

Another of the acquired essentials of success is a pure heart. In the lack of this is to be found the source of the so-called failures of edu-

HOW TO BE RICH

cation. It sometimes happens that a young man is sent to college by his parents. He is a brilliant fellow and enters at the head of his class. In the course of a few years he comes out at the other end of the class, and returns home to be a burden and a disgrace to his family for the remainder of his life. Ever afterward in that community if a father does not care to heed his son's request for college training, he points to that fellow with the remark that the kind of education that turns out that sort of product is good for nothing.

What is the trouble? It is not with the education at all, but with the kind of thing upon which such a valuable commodity was wasted. That kind of boy, because of his moral lack, would have been but a miserable failure under any conditions. The trouble was not with the mental training, but with the moral character of the boy. If he had had anything in him to begin with, the training of his mind would have increased its value many fold.

The world demands to-day two qualities in

ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

its workers: that they know, and that they can be trusted. There is a widespread complaint that it is almost impossible to get those who possess both qualities; those who both know how to do their work, and who can be trusted to serve their employers as they would serve themselves. That kind of a life is sure to succeed.

Bishop Bashford touches the heart of the matter when he says: "Knowledge is the first essential of kingship or mastery. You or I would be terrified to be left alone on an engine running at the rate of sixty miles an hour. But the engineer is without fear, because his knowledge of the engine makes him its master. So the drugstore, and the chemical laboratory, and the electric generators destroy the uninitiated, who presume to trifle with them, but serve the masters, who understand their contents. Education first means knowledge, and knowledge is mastery. It starts one on the road to kingship. But while knowledge makes one king in the line which he masters, it alone will never give com-

HOW TO BE RICH

mand of human hearts. Faust was master of alchemy, but not king of men. Kingship springs from service, and often from sacrifice. The prophet must become a priest and bear the burdens and sins of his people before he can become their king. The father rules the family so far as he supports the family. The mother rules the home so far as she serves the home. As the children begin to serve, they, too, come to independence and authority. Mastery springs from knowledge, and kingship springs from service. But when one becomes both prophet and priest, then no power on earth can keep him from his kingdom."

Recent developments in political and business life show that the world is demanding as never before that its successful men and women be true to the fundamental principles of righteousness. This can be obtained only through that transformation into the divine likeness of which we have spoken.

Going forth, then, with a strong body, a trained mind, and a pure heart, we shall be

ACQUIRED ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

able to win from nature, companions, books, the Divine Spirit, and from every other available source their richest possible contribution to our life. But to win these things we must not sleep during the formative period of life. At this period must be developed right habits of thought, vigor of body and mind, and strength of character, or the chances will be forever against us.

One can not come down the Hudson from Albany to New York on a beautiful summer day, and take in all the delightful scenery along that charming waterway—past the Highlands and the old home of Washington Irving, and Sleepy Hollow, where Rip Van Winkle dreamed away his twenty years of life—without having it impressed upon him how much one would lose by sleeping through twenty years of the best of life in the midst of all that loveliness.

The meditation simply serves to remind one of the fact that many people do just that thing, not for twenty years only, but for all their lifetime.

HOW TO BE RICH

We have read of a shepherd boy in the Alps who found a flower of unusual beauty growing on the mountain, which he plucked,—when suddenly a door opened in the mountain-side, leading into a cavern, where he found heaps of jewels piled about the floor. He began to fill his bag with the glittering gems, when an angel appeared, and said, "Take all you like, but don't forget the best." Laden with the treasures, he went out and started down the mountain, when his jewels turned to dust. Turning back he could not find the way, and he remembered that he had forgotten his flower. That had been the key to the treasure house, and without it he had lost all.

Let us be awake to the riches of life, and in that fact itself we shall hold in our hands the key to their possession.

IX. Working With the Master Workman

“The glory is not in the task, but in
The doing of it for Him.”

—*Ingelow.*

“We are building every day
In a good or evil way,
And the structure as it grows
Will our inmost self disclose.”

“He stood, the youth they called the Beautiful,
At morning, on his untried battlefield,
And laughed with joy to see his stainless shield,
When, with a tender smile, but doubting sigh,
His lord rode by.
When evening fell, they brought him, wounded sore,
His battered shield with sword-thrusts gashed and rent,
And laid him where the king stood by his tent.
‘Now thou art Beautiful,’ the master said,
And bared his head.”

—*Hawes.*

“For we are laborers together with God.”—*Paul.*

WORKING WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

IN any field of labor one of the first things essential to success is that we work in harmony with the laws of the universe—that we be in line with God.

In order to get the best out of any kind of machinery, it must be handled by one who thoroughly understands it; and if it goes wrong, one who knows all about it must be the mender. If your watch should go wrong, you would not take it to a blacksmith or a boiler-maker to get it repaired, but to a jeweler, who has the peculiar knowledge and skill needed to set it right. No difference how splendid may be the locomotive as it lies upon the track with steam up, ready for the long run, if you put on board a man who has never before been in the cab, and require him to run it, everybody would expect wreck and disaster. So with the marvelous machinery of

HOW TO BE RICH

human souls—no one but the Master who knows all about them can set them right since they have gone wrong; and only He can safely guide them after they have been righted.

Therefore, it is not enough that we fit ourselves in the best way we know how, and that we turn to God for salvation and pure hearts, but we must everywhere and forever work with Him to achieve the best. His program, not on one point, but on all points, must be accepted as the rule of life. We must take Him, not only as Savior, but as Guide; not only as the One to give us the right start, but as the One upon whose strength and wisdom and love we shall lean always. How very much to the point, then, is Paul's statement to the Corinthians, when he says, "We are laborers together with God." If we think at all how very evident is this fact in relation to the material world, it does not take us long to make the discovery here that God can work without us.

Walking one day by the roadside, I plucked a clover head, and became very much inter-

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

ested in examining it with the help of a microscope. I found it was not a single flower as I had once supposed, but that it was composed of a hundred flowers, each one as complete and perfect and beautiful as anything the mind could conceive. Yet that flower, or head of flowers, had grown there by the wayside, neglected so far as man was concerned, and having received not the slightest attention from his hand. There God was working without man.

We are told that "He looketh upon the earth, and it trembleth, He toucheth the hills, and they smoke."

Some time ago in one of the popular magazines was a description of the last great earthquake in Java. You may remember the remarkably brilliant sunsets for months after that shock, supposed to have been caused by dust particles thrown into the upper air by that mighty force. The writer, who was an eye witness to that remarkable convulsion of nature, describes the scene as the earth and the mountains began to tremble. He ran out of the

HOW TO BE RICH

house, and out of the little city lying on a curving seacoast, and after climbing part way up the mountain to the rear, came upon a crevice in the earth from which fire issued.

Passing this, and becoming exhausted, he paused to look back. Many little vessels with white sails were lying at anchor in the bay. Suddenly the earth opened up in the bottom of the sea, and the waters began to seethe and hiss as they poured into the abyss of fire beneath. That line of vessels broke from their moorings and began to move, nearer and nearer to that awful caldron, until one by one they went over the brink and were lost forever in its unknown depths.

There was a terrific explosion, followed by darkness as of night. When that pall lifted the city had disappeared, islands had sunk into the sea, rivers had been turned out of their courses, new islands were thrown up, and what was once sea had become dry land—in short, the whole geography of the region had been changed.

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

What had happened? The Lord had touched the earth with the finger of His power. Man had nothing to do with it.

We sometimes blame God for these terrible events in their loss of human life, but we are told that without the action of those forces that incidentally produce such terrible results the world would long ago have become uninhabitable. Man has not yet grown wise enough to keep out of the way of danger in the working out of the results of these beneficent forces.

But these little earth convulsions are nothing, we are told, when compared with what goes on at times in other parts of our Father's possessions. Dark spots occasionally appear on the sun. These indicate great physical disturbances in the substance of that glorious luminary. Those who have carefully studied these things, tell us that great yawning chasms at times open up on its surface large enough to engulf our earth in one corner of them. That is, there is being enacted before our eyes, did we have the

HOW TO BE RICH

reach and keenness of vision to behold it, scenes beside which the terrors of Java's earthquake are but as child's play.

The sun itself is only a little one among heaven's luminaries. God swings those mighty worlds like playthings through their immense orbits, and that without noise or jar. Every little while He touches one of them and it falls from its place in heaven, is burned up and goes out in darkness.

As I look upon these countless millions of suns that shine in heaven, and think how my Father holds them all in the hollow of His hand, what a delightful feeling of safety somehow creeps over me! And as I think how He holds me, not in the hollow of His hand merely, but with the great everlasting arms all about me, how it thrills and floods my soul with gratitude and love and joy! Can any harm come to me unless I take myself voluntarily out of those arms? Ah, no. As soon shall the pearly gates rust with age, or the luster of heaven itself grow dim. Yes, thank God! my Father can work without me.

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

Another fact which we are also early to discover is that man can not work without God. It may be that you have planted roses in which you took a great deal of interest. You protected them during the winter, and as spring came on how careful you were to note the signs of returning life. At length you saw the bush unfold its glossy green leaves to the summer sun, and as you watched it closely one morning with the dewdrops shining upon the little green buds, one or two of them became tipped with red, as if an angel's brush had touched them. Finally, as they burst into the fragrance and beauty of bloom and looked up into your face, you said: "What beauties! See what fine roses I have grown."

But you did n't grow them. You had a part in it. They would not have come to such perfection—perhaps, might not have grown at all—without your care and attention. Neither would they have grown without God's air and rain and sunshine. In the production of those sweet flowers you have been a worker together with God.

HOW TO BE RICH

So the gardener or the farmer tills his land, puts in his seeds, and cares for them; but God gives the proper seasons and the conditions necessary to growth; and He gives to the seeds their strange power of taking hold on the elements of growth in earth and air and water, transforming them into their own peculiar product to please the taste and support the life of man.

What ingratitude is displayed by some of us when we enjoy all these things and never thank God for His part in supplying them.

Our great and beautiful buildings are planned and erected only by using His materials, brought together by His forces, through the activities of a brain created and energized by His wisdom and power.

If we turn to the realm of invention, the same thing is true—we are here also workers with God. We admire the mighty throbbing engine as it rushes across the continent with its precious load; or the giant stationary engine doing the work of hundreds of men. We say,

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

“What a product of human ingenuity!” and so it is. But if God had not made the raw materials for its construction it could never have been. Had He not provided the water, and grown the wood, and stored the coal for our use, that wonderful piece of mechanism would lie in its place a helpless mass of useless metal.

We travel in the electric car without horses or engine, or any other visible means of locomotion. We communicate thought through the air without wires. We speak from one city to another hundreds of miles apart, and from ship to ship over great stretches of stormy sea, and save hundreds of lives by so doing. We have the brightest and most dazzling light without any of the means known to our fathers.

We simply furnish the apparatus for these things—God furnishes the power, the real thing that accomplishes the results in them all. Although the thunders have rolled in the darkened heavens from the beginning, it is but recently that man has grown to the intellectual

HOW TO BE RICH

stature that enables him to bring them down to rumble over his streets. God has given us the wisdom to accomplish these marvels, but the lightnings are His own. And so it is everywhere. We are workers with God in every department of physical life and activity.

The wonder is how so many men—how any man—can thus work with God continually and everywhere, and yet be so dull of mind and blind of heart as never to see Him anywhere.

But this suggests to us another great thought. We are workers with God on our own lives. He made the worlds and knows all the secrets of nature and life. He created us and thoroughly understands our every need. And, loving us as He does with a love that is immeasurable, He has given us His Word in order to show us what is best for us. Having come into a position where we are at variance with that law, the greatest thing in the world for us is to be set right.

The greatest conquest you and I can ever make is that of self. This is the greatest pos-

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

sible achievement in life. What would you not give sometimes to be able absolutely to control yourself—to direct every action of life in perfect harmony with your best knowledge and highest judgment? Such a victory would be worth more to the soul than anything else in the world. It can be won if we will. We can't do it ourselves—perhaps you have tried that and failed. Neither can God accomplish it without our co-operation. Both God and the soul must unite in this conflict. God has given us the plan of what is best, and He has promised that in our struggles for the realization of that plan His grace shall be sufficient for us.

Men have sought in the diamond mines of South Africa and the gold fields of California, Australia, and the Klondyke for earth's riches, all forgetful of the fact that the richest treasures of the universe lay buried in their own neglected souls.

Donald G. Mitchell, in that delightful little book, entitled "Dream Life," says: "The consciousness of having mastered passion en-

HOW TO BE RICH

dows the soul with an element of power that can never harmonize with defeat." This mastery we can have only by God's help. God's plan contemplates the best possible in the *character* of your life and mine. For nothing short of this as a goal will God work with us.

Ruskin tells us that while studying the architecture of one of the great churches of Italy he discovered some statues high up in the building which seemed very perfect; but on climbing up to them he found them shams, only the portions that could be seen from the floor being perfect. Is not that the picture of many a life? How often we see persons who on first acquaintance seem very perfect, yet on closer knowledge are found to be utterly unattractive. Only that part intended for display has any semblance of form or beauty.

When Ruskin as an art critic was disgusted with such a revelation, what shall be His judgment who is Himself the very essence of all beauty? He expects something better of us than that. We have no right to live one-sided

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

Christian lives. It is our privilege to grow into the "stature of the fullness of Christ."

However, we are forced to the conviction here, in all reverence and sincerity, that our lives will never be all that they might have been. How much higher would I stand to-day intellectually if I had mastered every lesson assigned me in school? How much higher spiritually would I be had I resisted every temptation and kept myself free from every known sin. No better illustration of the truth can be given on this point than the old one of Michael Angelo's statue of David. It is said that a sensation was created in the world of art by the unveiling of that matchless piece of work. But perfect as it was there was yet a flaw in it. That piece of marble had been wrought upon by another workman, who hacked and marred it until he thought it was worthless, and then threw it into the back yard. Angelo, passing by, saw it there half covered with rubbish, and seeing the possibilities in it, took it up and wrought upon it with results which surprised

HOW TO BE RICH

the world. Yet with all his genius and skill he could not make of it what he could have done had it not been abused by the awkward hands of that unskillful workman.

So God can take your life, vile and unworthy and marred and neglected though it may have been, and make of it a wonderfully glorious thing, fit to adorn the brightest halls of the Celestial City; yet even He, with all His wisdom and power, can not make of it all that it would have been had it not been soiled and marred by sin. If God were working independently of us this might not be true—we dare say it would not be true—but so long as we are workers with Him, and He does not step in and change this human nature and make it other than it is, it must be so. The same thought is well expressed by the familiar words of the song:

“ I walked in the woodland meadows,
Where sweet the thrushes sing,
And found on a bed of mosses,
A bird with a broken wing ;
I healed its wing and each morning
It sang its old sweet strain,

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

But the bird with the broken pinion,
Never soared as high again.

“ I found a young life broken
By sin’s seductive art,
And touched with a Christlike pity
I took him to my heart ;
He lived with a nobler purpose,
And struggled not in vain,
But the life that sin had stricken,
Never soared as high again.”

This thought brings to us with mighty force the appeal to waste no more time. We have wasted too much already.

God’s plan for me is the best possible in the character of my life, but that is not all; He expects the fullest possible in the *quantity* of that life.

Anything that is lacking in vitality is not attractive. The sickly plant or animal or child is not natural or what God intended it should be. “A thing is beautiful in proportion to its fullness of life.”

God does not want you to live a narrow and hampered life, if it is possible for you to live one that is broad and free. He does not want

HOW TO BE RICH

you to live a shallow life, if you can live one that is deep and full. He requires not only quality, but quantity.

One of the saddest things in the world would be to see a lovely child—however much we love it as such—remain a child in body and in mind through all the years. We desire not only a perfect child, but perfect development and growth in that child.

So God expects the same in us. How forcibly this lesson is taught in the parable of the pounds! The Master called His ten servants and delivered to them ten pounds with the command, "Occupy till I come." When He returned the first came and said, "Lord, Thy pound hath gained ten pounds," and he was rewarded accordingly. Then came the second with the report that his pound had gained five pounds, and he, too, received his commendation and his reward. Then another came, saying, "Lord, behold here is Thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin."

Note this: he had neither lost it, nor wasted

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

it, nor thrown it aside as worthless; he had taken great care of it—even kept it laid up in a napkin—yet he was condemned. Not because he had soiled it, but because he had not used and developed it.

If it were possible for us to go through life with all the purity and innocence of childhood, we would be doing vastly better than most of us are, yet even that would fall short of the divine requirement. He expects us to use our talents and develop much more power than that with which He originally endowed us. Let us never forget that we need both quality and quantity of life.

God has given us the materials to erect a noble building; and we are each building after some fashion. He tells us that our building is to be tested by fire. Are we using the materials He gives? Are we building after His plans? Are we workers with Him on our lives? No difference how splendid may have been our equipment to begin with, no matter how glorious our entrance upon life's duties, we shall

HOW TO BE RICH

not work with God as He intends if we abuse or misuse the body, or if we neglect either intellectual or spiritual opportunity. The "Commencement day" of the student is really the beginning and not the end of his endeavors. So the finest possible preparation of body, mind, and spirit will be in vain unless we continue to work through all the drudgery of a lifetime in perfect fellowship with the great Master Workman of the universe.

We would say further, that the achievement of the good is ours, not that we may keep it to ourselves, and for ourselves, but that we may impart it to others. Therefore God expects us to be also workers with Him on the lives of our fellows. The Master Workman has bestowed distinguished honor upon us in calling us to run His errands of mercy, and be workers with Him in the construction of a redeemed race.

Those whose lives have been filled and thrilled with the divine life of God can go always with a message of power to others. We

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

sometimes excuse ourselves from our God-given task on the ground that we are not specifically called to the ministry or missionary work. The call, "Go ye into all the world," was not limited to any one class of disciples. Suppose your child had gone out in a skiff on the river, and, it may be through his own carelessness, were thrown into the waters and were drowning. I can swim, and am standing on the bank watching his struggles. You appeal to me to save him, and I coldly answer, "No, I do n't belong to a professional life-saving crew." Could you ever forgive me?

Every saved soul knows, or ought to know, the way of life. How, then, must the great Father of all regard us if we stand by indifferent while His wayward children, for whom Christ died, go down in the dark waves to eternal death?

As we think of what the Master expects, little wonder if we sometimes feel that we are not sufficient for these things. But we must never lose sight of the fact that we work with

HOW TO BE RICH

Him. Two mistakes are we apt to make here. Some become discouraged by the thought that they are working alone, and all depends upon them; while others become lazy because they imagine that God will do it all. Both are in error and must fall short of the best. When we work as if by our own might we must do all, and then rest in our great Leader as if He were doing it all—then great things will, indeed, be done.

Many of us remember when the first efforts were made to run the street cars with electricity. Many a time the car would stop on a little hill, and people would say, "The power has given out." But not so; man had not yet come into perfect connection with the power, that was all. So when with the best possible equipment on our part we reach up and come in perfect touch with the Power above, there will be—there can be—no question about results.

Every other kind of life has proven a failure. Give a man every advantage of wealth and he may turn out a criminal; train him in all

WITH THE MASTER WORKMAN

the “culture” of the “most exclusive society” and he may be as coarse as the unwashed herd; educate him in the most famous schools and it may only the better prepare him for a life of supreme villainy; but cultivate in him a genuine love for the things of God, so that he will be a worker with Him, and even though he may lack all these other things, his life will be full of a glory supernal.

“ We are living, we are dwelling, in a grand and awful time ;
In an age on ages telling—to be living is sublime.

“ Will ye play, then, will ye dally, with your music and your
wine ?

Up, it is Jehovah’s rally ; God’s own arm hath need of thine ;
Hark, the onset, will ye fold your faith-clad arms in lazy lock ?
Up, O up, thou drowsy soldier, worlds are charging to the
shock.

“ On, let all the soul within you for the truth’s sake go abroad.
Strike, let every nerve and sinew tell on ages, tell for God.”

X. The Ultimate Result

“ 'T is life whereof our nerves are scant,
More life and fuller, that I want.”

“Wearing the white flower of a blameless life.”
—*Tennyson*.

“ Look not beyond the stars for heaven,
Nor 'neath the sea for hell ;
Know thou, who leads a useful life
In Paradise doth dwell.”
—*Hafiz*.

“ Do thy duty, that is best ;
Leave unto thy Lord the rest.”
—*Lowell*.

“ For what is age but youth's full bloom,
A riper, more transcendent youth?
A weight of gold is never old.”

“ Yet I see my palace shining, where my love sits
 amaranth twining,
And I know the gates stand open, and I shall
 enter in.”
—*Craik*.

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

GOD has given us the sources of wealth of which we have been thinking; He has made us free beings with the power of choice and the capacity for making the most out of these things; He has taught us how, by making the best of ourselves, and by working with Him, we may reap the richest results for ourselves and for others. It remains for us to discern, if we can, the ultimate purpose of it all.

Why does God give us these precious things of life, and work with us, and through us, and for us, with such infinite love and patience? Why, but that our own being may be perfected. The ultimate perfecting of life itself is God's great purpose for us. This world is a great school for the development of men and women until they become true children of God, and as such, heirs of the ages and the eterni-

HOW TO BE RICH

ties. This, so far as this world is concerned, is the final, the supreme result.

That God has a loftier purpose for us than has ever yet been realized by individuals or nations is evident. The instinct of perfection is a part of our being, and as such is prophetic of God's plan for us. When we employ any one to do our work, we want it done perfectly. On the other hand, the man or woman who does a piece of work, if at all worthy, does that work with the desire to excel.

The architect, the artist, the sculptor, the poet, the mechanic, the professional man—in short, any worker at his best, works not merely for the money that is in it, however important and necessary that may be in its way, but for the joy of producing something worthy.

We often hear non-Christians say, "I do n't want to begin the Christian life unless I can be better than some professing Christians I know;" a very commendable wish, as all must admit. God would not have planted in us this feeling that we ought to rise to higher things

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

were such not His purpose for us, or the gratifying of this instinct not possible of realization.

A further evidence of God's purpose for us lies in the fact of individual and race development. In the beginning He commissioned man to subdue the earth and have dominion over it. In spite of the presence of sin and the havoc wrought by it, the Lord has been training and shaping through the ages the lives and destinies of races and nations so as to bring about that result. Israel with her instinct for religion, Greece with her passion for knowledge and culture, Rome with her adaptation for law and government, and America with her capacity for science and its application to the work of the world, have each had a large part in bringing the world nearer to the divine ideal. But that we have realized that ideal no intelligent mind would for a moment dare affirm. In fact, the attitude of the very greatest minds was well put by one of our ablest scholars and teachers recently when he said, "I used to think we knew pretty much all that was to be known, but the

HOW TO BE RICH

older I grow, and the wider my experience becomes, the more firmly I am convinced that we know but very little about anything."

God is also through the years not only leading races, but training individual lives. The truth is, that national and race progress are possible only through the perfecting of individual lives. These give the impulse and shape the destinies of nations. And as in the first instance the richest possible things have not yet been realized, neither can it be true in the other case.

The facts, then, of race progress and the development of the individual demonstrate God's purpose to be the perfecting of life. Not merely the working with Him in an indifferent way, but the actual realization of His ideal in us. Since, therefore, the instincts of the soul, the leading of the divine hand in the history of the race, and the experience of the individual, all confirm the message of God's Word, "Be ye perfect," we can not escape the responsibility thus laid upon us of realizing it in our lives.

One of the great questions of life, therefore,

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

is, How shall I attain it? How shall I realize the ultimate divine ideal for my soul? We would not presume to speak rashly here, for God can be trusted to lead aright the soul that seeks such leading. A few hints, however, may be of value, as many have gone sadly astray on this point. God does not always explain His way to us in advance, neither does He constantly manifest His purpose on the surface, either in His dealings with men or nations; but all along we catch glimpses, as the clouds part here and there, of His real plan. Here, for instance, is a man of unusual talent, whom God wants for some great work, but he needs discipline and strength. So he is put in a hard place and allowed to make his own way out; and by the time he gets out he has developed that power of muscle, or brain, or character which makes him master of the situation, and a leader in God's great work. The very idea of this sort of experience involves the necessity of struggle and of temptation. A fragment of personal experience may not be out of place here.

HOW TO BE RICH

I used to do some boating on a little stream that will always hold sweet memories for me. My life is purer because I have looked into its crystal waters, dreamed on its sloping green banks, meditated in its depths of blue overhead, and drunk the sweetness of its springtime flowers. But in seeking those enjoyments I always went up stream.

It would have been easier to drift downward than to row upward, but above lay the beautiful landscape, the gently sloping hills of emerald, the clear water so pure and bright that you could scarcely tell where the stream left off and the verdure of the bank began, so perfect was the reflection. Up there were the water-lilies and the forest dipping its branches in the stream, and all that made the experience precious to me.

I would have had those delights if it had cost me ten times the effort, and if rowing down stream had been ten times as easy, and have thought myself richly repaid. It was somewhat of a task to reach those things. It often made the muscles ache and the sweat stand out on the

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

forehead, but resting among those delightful things was happiness itself. The thrill of joy on discovering a new flower, the loveliness of the great white water-lilies floating on the bosom of the lake, the ripple of the transparent waves on the pebbly shore, the fragrance of the wild strawberries peeping with scarlet cheek from under the scalloped leaf amid the grass—these are things I would go a long way to enjoy again, and make some sacrifices in order to do so.

Effort and struggle and battling against the current being necessary in order to the attainment of best things either in the sphere of body, mind, or spirit, it must seem to any intelligent being that the effort to escape the force of that struggle—which always means temptation and victory over baser things—whether it be by Roman Catholic indulgence or Protestant juggling with the doctrine of sanctification, is unworthy of the soul, and contrary to the fundamental facts of God's universe. To maintain that we can get beyond that point where we can be

HOW TO BE RICH

tempted, or where temptation means anything, which is the same thing, would surely be putting the servant above his Lord, who was Himself "tempted in all points like as we are." This we can not claim, for "the servant is not above his Lord."

As we understand this world and the life we live here, we must either take this position, or the only other possible, namely, that we have already arrived at the highest point we are capable of reaching both in mental and spiritual things.

The chief trouble with our discussions of perfection has been the fact that we have too much concerned ourselves about God's part, and too little heeded man's part. The psalmist showed a discerning spirit when he said, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." The work is of God, who, as Master Musician, touches the harp of life as we yield it to Him, bringing out as He alone can all the music of which it is capable. Our part lies in the submission of ourselves to Him.

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

We must co-operate with Him by having a teachable spirit. The writer has a friend who is intelligent and worthy in many ways, and yet he is of such a peculiar make-up that no one can teach him anything. Look up the latest information on any subject from farming to the philosophy of the Infinite, and he "already knew that" and can tell you more on the subject than you ever dreamed. Yet ask him whether he has read a certain book on any given subject, and he will almost invariably say No. He does not read much, yet he has the notion that there is nothing worth thinking about that he does not already know from top to bottom. You might as well try by argument to turn upside down the mountains on the moon as to convince him that there are "more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of" in his philosophy.

It is needless to say that such an attitude of mind shuts out the soul from all hope of larger things. It is a good thing to heed the injunction, "Be not wise in your own conceits." It is not a

HOW TO BE RICH

good thing in these days for me to imagine that God has chosen me as a special messenger to men, and that He would rather speak through me than through anybody else. It is wholesome for me to believe that if any other earnest seeker after truth does not see things just as I do, that the chances are he is as likely to be right as I am. An open mind and a teachable spirit bring me that which is most essential, so far as my part of the work goes, to the perfecting of my life.

An humble mind is also important. In fact, without this a teachable spirit is an impossibility. God bids me in His Word, "Be clothed with humility;" "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves;" "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth." And I know this to be a part of His message to my soul, just as surely as the words, "Be ye perfect." Common sense tells me that without this kind of meekness "perfection" is but a sorry thing, indeed.

Why, then, is it so hard for some of us to

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

learn the lesson of the Pharisee, who thanked God that he was not as other men? An apostle of "perfect love" entered a church on a beautiful spring morning to hear a minister whom he had never heard. When the minister greeted him kindly as he entered, he hissed between his teeth, "I have come to criticise." He had not come to hear a message from God, but to find out if his particular fad were emphasized there to the exclusion of every other phase of truth. Hate was so visibly written all over his countenance that almost any one would have sooner taken him for an escaped criminal than for even the most common kind of a professing Christian.

Why can we not learn that the only way to testify to God's power to perfect the life is not by talk of any kind whatsoever, but by showing to the world our own lives transformed? "What we are, we shall teach; not voluntarily, but involuntarily, character teaches over our head." Such holiness does not need prating about. In fact, prating about even the reality,

HOW TO BE RICH

if such a thing were possible, would be nauseous. It is ridiculous to talk about a really holy life not witnessing for Christ without self publication. Wherever Christianity is known, it is a recognized truth that what a Christian is, he is by the grace of God. Since God is able to do for me "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," and as His plans for me are no doubt higher and more glorious than my fondest dreams for myself, why should I expatiate on my own attainments either mental or spiritual?

I am altogether too close to myself to get the proper perspective. I may be living up to all my light, and yet my neighbor, rejoicing in a larger degree of light, may regard me as a hypocrite, and I may be unconsciously lowering God's standard in the eyes of men. An humble mind and a teachable spirit are absolutely essential to the perfecting of my life. This belongs to my part of the work, and I must let God do His part in His own way, both as it concerns my life and the lives of others.

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

Some would try, as it were, to compel the Lord to run all souls in the same mold, and give them all the same ideas and experiences. As He has not seen fit to do so in nature, why should He do it in grace? This notion has created endless difficulty in leading men to Christ, by spreading abroad the impression that all must have exactly the same experiences in conversion. And as here, so with our higher life. God is too great and resourceful to be confined in His dealings with free beings to any one method of doing things. There is no need nor excuse for confusing the soul at this point.

The scholars and saints of the Church have never agreed, and do not agree to-day, on some points as to the life of holiness. Why all these labored arguments and all this hair-splitting about "roots of sin," and other theological fine points, with which some of us are only too familiar? What is the use of trying to force distinctions where none exist? When we come to God for pardon and cleansing, we come for all He has to give. God is wise enough to un-

HOW TO BE RICH

derstand the cry of His children. We need not tell Him how to perfect our lives, or how to help us do it. He knows infinitely better than we do what we need, and how to bestow it.

If my child should come to me with its little hand all crushed and bleeding, even though it had not the slightest idea of what was to be done, and could not tell me a thing about what it wanted, I would at once appreciate the situation, and do just as much, and just as gladly and quickly, all that could be done, as though it had placed before me a scientific description of its hurt.

To say that our great, loving, all-wise, Heavenly Father will not, or can not, do as much for His sin-crushed child, is making Him less than God, less even than poor, weak, sinful man. Why, then, shall we not each draw near to God with open mind and heart, free from the bondage of shibboleths and pet phrases, without being branded with the earmarks of any sect or clique, and by committing our ways unto Him, and working with Him, without presuming to

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

dictate how, or where, or when, in simple faith allow Him to "perfect that which concerneth us?"

What the ultimate result of life in perfect harmony with God will mean in other realms than this none of us have either the knowledge nor the vision to determine. But we can rest in confidence that "The soul can be trusted to the end. That which is so beautiful and attractive as these relations must be succeeded and supplanted only by what is more beautiful, and so on forever."

We can rejoice in the truth of John's message, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

I find in my soul an insatiable craving after life—a life that will not end. The body does not by nature hunger for those elements not found within it. So only by the infinite in us do we have such longings, and become aware that we are more than finite.

HOW TO BE RICH

As nature does not deceive the instinct of the fish for the water, or of the bird for the air, or of the body for food, so we may be certain it will not deceive the higher faculties in their instinct for life. Other creatures soon reach perfection here—the highest things of which they are capable—while man but begins to grow and learn and find out how much there is before him. If he ever rises to his full height it must be elsewhere in other apartments of the many mansions. We may be sure that nature is not left dead at the top.

Matter so far as we can tell is indestructible. This is a principle of science. The form of matter can be changed, but no atom destroyed. If death, therefore, so far as science can trace, can not destroy a single atom of our body, how shall it destroy the higher partner, the spirit? If such forces as heat, light, and electricity can not be destroyed, but only changed, how can that larger force that guides and controls these after such a wonderful fashion be destroyed?

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

As I study into the secrets and mysteries of the world, I am able to trace laws—that is, I can see how the Mind back of all these things has been and is working. The fact that I can so think His thoughts after Him demonstrates that a Mind like mine, only immeasurably greater, stands back of these things, and that I am created in His image. Because of these and other kindred facts, I can declare with all confidence, and with profound joy:

“Therefore to whom turn I but to Thee, the ineffable Name ?

Builder and Maker, Thou, of houses not made with hands.
What, have fear of change from Thee who art ever the same ?

Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart that Thy power
expands ?

There shall never be one lost good. What was shall live as
before ;

The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound ;
What was good shall be good, with for evil, so much good
more ;

On the earth the broken arcs ; in the heaven a perfect round.
All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist ;

Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.

The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,

The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard ;

Enough that He heard it once : we shall hear it by and by.”

HOW TO BE RICH

That Eternal "Energy from which all things proceed," which is a postulate of all science; that accurate, logical, amazingly intelligent Energy, who is none other than our God, who called into being, and who guides and upholds all worlds, will bring to perfection that which we commit to Him. Our consent and co-operation is all that is needed, and He will provide for us as He does for the lesser creatures which He has made.

An article that appeared recently in an English magazine gives us a new and richer conception of God's care for His creatures. We wonder sometimes where the little feathered creatures go during the large part of the year when they are absent from us. All are not guided to the same summer or winter home, but this writer tells us that "The Tundra, a vast stretch of treeless swamp, millions of acres in extent, in Northern Europe and Asia within the Arctic circle, drains the old world of half its bird population. Life beats strongly under its six months of almost perpetual sun-

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

shine. Here buttercups, dandelions, forget-me-nots, and other flowers abound; no English meadow outvying these Arctic pastures in masses of purple, blue, and gold. All around this glorious domain lie millions of acres covered with beds of abundant food, cranberries and other berries of the same genus in forty varieties. The crop is not ripe until the middle or end of the Arctic summer, and if the birds had to wait until it was ripe, they might have to starve, arriving as they do on the very day of the melting of the snow. But the immense crop of ripe fruit of the previous season, ungathered by the birds, is quickly covered up by the snow, and kept pure and fresh, like crystallized fruit, until the melting of the snow again, when it is ready for them as soon as they arrive."

God thus provides bountifully, and in most unexpected and to us unthought of ways, for these little creatures of earth, and guides them in their flight. Shall He not much more give His blessing to those whom He has created

HOW TO BE RICH

in His own image? He, who feeds the birds and clothes the flowers in a more than royal beauty, will provide for His children here; and, better than all, that Wisdom and Love that has provided an earthly paradise beyond the frozen barriers of the north for His earthly creatures, has also provided an eternal paradise for His immortal children. And as He guides the birds in their perilous flight with unerring vision, so He will guide us safely to our haven.

With what exceeding beauty comes to mind in this connection the words of Bryant, "To a Waterfowl," as he sees its form against the evening sky:

"Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

"There is a power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

"He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will guide my steps aright."

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

Brief has been our life at the longest as we look to the past, but great beyond conception is it as we gaze into the future. A thought given some years ago at a college revival by Dr. W. A. Spencer has provided for me a ladder by which I have been able to climb up a few rounds and peer a little farther into the wealth of years and opportunities that are before me. Suppose that we could send an angel to gather the leaves from all the forests of the earth in springtime, and let him count them out one every hundred years until the last one has been numbered. In like manner let him pluck and count all the blades of grass on all the pastures and meadows and grassy plains in all the world. Then set him to counting the grains of sand, which make up the earth on which we tread. Then if he is not tired, let him measure out the waters of all the brooks, rivers, lakes, and oceans of the world, counting them out, drop by drop, one every thousand years, and after that, in like manner, the stars of heaven. After he has numbered all

HOW TO BE RICH

and come back from the limits of God's illimitable universe, and after you and I have lived yet as many millenniums beyond that as there are blades of grass and leaves in field and forest, grains of sand in the earth, drops of water in the oceans, and stars in heaven, still we will be but in the dawning hours of the great eternal day; still it can be said of us: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars FOR EVER AND EVER."

In view of the fact that such is life in its ultimate reality, and that only is true wealth which "makes life and the vast forever one grand, sweet song," well may the words of the poet be ours:

"It matters little where I was born,
Or if my parents were rich or poor ;
Whether they shrunk at the cold world's scorn,
Or walked in the pride of wealth secure.
But whether I live an honest man
And hold my integrity firm in my clutch,
I tell you brother, as plain as I can,
That matters much.

THE ULTIMATE RESULT

“ It matters little where be my grave—
If on the land or in the sea.
By purling brook or 'neath stormy wave,
It matters little or naught to me ;
But whether the angel of life comes down,
And marks my brow with his loving touch,
As one that shall wear the victor's crown,
That matters much.”

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